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The Best of Both Worlds

Aspirations, Drivers and Practices of Swedish Lifestyle Movers in Malta

Ulrika Åkerlund

Department of Geography and Economic History
Umeå University, Sweden
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Institutionen för Geografi och Ekonomisk Historia
Umeå Universitet
901 87 Umeå
Sverige

Department of Geography and Economic History
Umeå University
901 87 Umeå
Sweden

Tel: +46 90 786 54 61
Fax: +46 90 786 63 59
http://www.geo.umu.se
E-mail: ulrika.akerlund@geography.umu.se

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Introduction

> *"Today we can travel where we want to within Europe really, in principle we can do this without any passport, without border controls, without exchanging money, in most countries [...] My belonging is somewhere within this region." (Lars)*

> *"It's this about changing environment. It was very nice coming home this summer, because it was getting hot here, and then coming home to the greenness and singing birds which you almost never hear here, the flowerage at home. It's actually a luxury to be able to change environment like this." (Olof)*

It has often been claimed that contemporary societies are shaped by globalization; the rapid interconnections of societies, economies, markets, flows and information potentially linking all places in the world to each other (e.g. Robertson 1992; Savage et al. 2005). Human mobility, not least movement across international borders, is in many ways facilitated, and in the past couple of decades researchers have turned their attention toward mobility practices not primarily motivated by labour or political factors but rather driven by consumption and lifestyle values. In search for experiences, variation, escape or comfort, individuals are travelling, circulating, and migrating between places, challenging the notions of 'home' and 'away', 'everyday' and 'extraordinary'. This thesis addresses the ways lifestyle-led mobilities are produced and performed, by studying the mobility trajectories and experiences of Swedes dividing their time seasonally between Sweden and Malta. It explores how movers are faced with a structural framework that both facilitates and directs their choices concerning mobility, and how they interpret and respond to these structures. It also explores the imaginaries, meanings, and feelings for place, identity, and lifestyle that the movers negotiate through their mobility practices and through the links they create and sustain in places. Thus, this thesis is situated in an evolving field of research on *lifestyle mobilities*.

In the past decade, research on lifestyle-led mobilities has been distilled around the conceptualization of lifestyle migration, and manifold studies have contributed significantly to understanding the drivers, aspirations and experiences of moving, the similarities and differences between different types of moves, and their local and global impacts (e.g. Benson and O'Reilly 2009a; Casado-Diaz 2012). Benson and O'Reilly offer a dynamic definition of lifestyle migration as "the spatial mobility of relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that are meaningful because, for various reasons, they offer the potential of a better quality of

life" (2009a:2). Accounts of quality of life drivers commonly include climate, nature, comfort, novelty, community, authenticity, and health, and also often include an element of self-reflexivity or self-transformation (Hoey 2006). Exactly what quality of life implies is highly individualistic, and studies of lifestyle-led mobilities have included such varying phenomena as backpacking, second home tourism, seasonal migration, and student, retirement, or amenity migration (e.g. Cohen 2011; Hall and Müller 2004; McIntyre et al. 2006; King et al. 2000; Moss 2006).

The many temporal and spatial forms of lifestyle-led mobilities imply that a definitional consensus is difficult to achieve, and as O'Reilly argues, "analysis of human mobility as both a force and effect of globalization demands increasingly flexible concepts" (2003:302). One problem in migration and mobility research is the endeavour to define typologies of movers, since mobility patterns usually are complex and many individuals repeatedly and over time alter their roles and statuses. The example of the movers studied in this thesis illustrates this dilemma well: they are citizens of one country but hold a permanent address in another, with their holiday home located in the first country; they often also travel to yet other places to consume experiences; they have diffuse plans about if and where to move in the future; and they express highly ambiguous feelings toward the concepts of 'home' and 'belonging'. The question remains: "When is a tourist" (O'Reilly 2003:301), and when is a migrant? Thus, research needs to acknowledge the fluid nature of human mobilities, and, as will be argued throughout this thesis, also the fixities in place (or place attachments) that individuals make and sustain as they move through space (Gustafson 2002). McIntyre (2009) and later Cohen et al. (2013) suggested the term *lifestyle mobilities* as an overarching conceptualization of the interrelations between tourism mobilities and temporal, seasonal, circular, and more permanent forms of lifestyle migrations, emphasizing the ways mobility and choices concerning lifestyle co-mingle in modern societies. In this thesis, lifestyle mobilities are defined as those mobility practices undertaken by individuals based on their freedom of choice, of a temporal or more permanent duration, with or without any significant 'home base(s)', that are primarily driven by aspirations to increase quality of life, and that are primarily related to the individuals' lifestyle values. As an overarching concept this definition is intentionally rather elusive, as exact limitations are necessarily contextualized.

One profound element of lifestyle mobility is freedom; freedom of choice of lifestyle, and freedom of movement in order to access a particular element of the 'good life' (Gustafson 2002). Freedom to choose and freedom to move are in many aspects restricted to a privileged few, and lifestyle movers are

repeatedly described as affluent (e.g. Paris 2010). This is rather obvious when stereotypical images of the lifestyle mover are outlined, such as the wealthy retiree in Florida or the Costa del Sol, the cosmopolitan mobile professional frequenting airport VIP lounges, or the intellectual artist converting an old barn in the French countryside. However, lifestyle movers may also be less outstanding financially and career-wise, such as the bohemian backpackers in Varanasi, India, sustaining their extended stay abroad through repeated periods of hard work and saving up at home (Korpela 2009), the youngsters financing their 'gap year' in Australia as working tourists, or the middle-class British couple moving to cheaper housing in rural France or southern Spain upon retirement to make their pensions last longer (O'Reilly 2000; Benson 2011). However, a common denominator of lifestyle movers is their *relative* affluence (Benson and O'Reilly 2009b) in position to the majority of people in the world, including different kinds of capital; not least cultural, social and symbolic capital, which shape their privileges to, for example, cross borders and access visas or permanent residency schemes (Benson 2011).

Yet 'freedom' is always contextualized and set within intersecting and sometimes restrictive frameworks. Choice is always influenced, by structures ('large' such as national policy, and 'small' such as household composition), by feelings toward and imaginaries of places, by others' choices, by markets, by those you depend upon or who depend upon you. The mover has to make a range of decisions regarding destination, residence, timing of travels, which ties to places to cut and which to keep, and so on (King et al. 2000). Influences from mediators can play an important role, and since both rationality and emotions are involved, decision-making is often difficult. At many destinations lifestyle mobility is seen as a lucrative business, and structural frameworks are sometimes tailored to direct or steer flows of lifestyle movers. Lifestyle-led mobility, "though an individualist concept, is fashioned by the global rather than the personal" (Kershen 2009:ix), and lifestyle movers enter a sometimes frustrating and difficult process to make sense of structures, of influences, and not least of their own desires; tailoring the good life is a complex venture.

Aims

The empirical focus of this thesis is on long-term and semi-permanent mobility; specifically, the mobility trajectories of Swedish retirees spending extensive parts of the year in the Mediterranean island state of Malta. All the retirees in my study have moved their permanent residential address from Sweden to Malta, and spend approximately six to nine months there. However, all of them travel routinely to Sweden for rather extensive periods

of time, and for many there is no clear primacy of one home place over the other. The ways the movers describe how they arrange their mobility practices suggest that their decisions have multiple influences. As noted in earlier studies, the understanding of how movers make decisions needs to be sensitive to both structural frameworks and individual agency (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones 2000; Benson 2012). To address this, this study will approach lifestyle mobilities from two angles: the production aspect and the performance aspect.

The production aspect focuses on structures and activities that create opportunities for, or hinder, lifestyle mobilities. As I started my research by studying agents promoting lifestyle mobility, such as property agents, tax consultants and the media, it became clear that movers certainly do not make decisions in isolation. The performance of lifestyle mobility is, furthermore, not only promoted by a wide variety of mediators but is also controlled by 'large' structures, such as national and supranational policy, transport infrastructures, and national and public discourse. An example of this is the outspoken wish of many governments to attract affluent lifestyle movers and the resulting packages of policy directed at achieving this goal. In many ways opportunities for finding the good life through mobility are facilitated and promoted, while in other ways they are limited.

The performance aspect focuses on individual agency and the personal motivations, outcomes and meanings of lifestyle mobility. Performance relates to how movers interpret structures and how they seek to manoeuvre, manipulate or adapt to them, in order to make the most of opportunities. Performance also relates to individual perceptions of places, place attachments, lifestyles and identity. Earlier studies have shown that while movers often have a highly aspirational drive and a clear idea of a strategy for achieving quality of life, emotions and imaginaries may influence decisions, leading to ad hoc solutions to problems (King et al. 2000; Benson and O'Reilly 2009a).

The aim of this thesis is, thus, to understand how production and performance aspects of lifestyle mobilities are related, and how notions of identity and belonging are negotiated in relation to lifestyle mobility practices. Research questions that have guided the research are:

a) What are the structures, agents and networks that produce, promote and mediate opportunities for lifestyle mobilities; and in what ways do they facilitate, steer, challenge, control or limit mobility practices?

b) How do lifestyle movers interpret structures, and in response how do they seek to manoeuvre, manipulate, or adapt to structures in order to access quality of life through mobility?

c) In what ways are issues of identity and belonging related to the ways lifestyle movers interpret structures, imagine places, and arrange their mobility practices?

Outline of the thesis

This thesis is based on four papers, each exploring different aspects of the production and performance of lifestyle mobility. Together, they form the empirical basis for the thesis, and the papers' theoretical contributions are discussed in the conceptual part of the thesis, which has been introduced in this first chapter. Next, the theoretical chapter is divided into two parts. In the first, central concepts and definitions and the ways they have been used in this thesis are discussed, while in the second the emergence of a distinct field of research on lifestyle-led mobilities is traced and outlined, and this thesis is situated within the ongoing theorization of the phenomena. In the chapter on data and methods, methodological considerations and challenges encountered during the design are discussed, as are the fieldwork and analysis phases of the research process. After this, the context of the case study of Swedish lifestyle movers in Malta is presented. The final chapter discusses the main theoretical contributions of the studies, focusing on the interplay between the production and performance aspects of lifestyle mobilities.

Delimitations

The research conducted in this thesis is based on a rather small set of in-depth interviews and descriptive data collected from a survey and field observation. The analysis is qualitative, and sought to identify and explore in depth the variance of processes and experiences of lifestyle mobility. As the research is based on a case study of the semi-permanent and seasonal retirement mobility of Swedes in Malta, the theoretical conclusions that can be drawn from it are both time-specific and highly contextualized as it is an example of how lifestyle mobility processes can take place within a certain framework. A potential weakness of case study research is that the theory built from it can be rich in data but lack links to a general perspective, resulting in narrow and idiosyncratic theory. On the other hand, case studies usually provide theory that is empirically valid, and may offer opportunities for creative insight as they often present contradictory or paradoxical evidence (Eisenhardt 1999). Thus, case studies may well 'unfreeze' thinking

and call attention to limitations of earlier theorization, especially when they are conducted on cases that are not 'mainstream'. This is one reason I chose to conduct this research on Swedish movers in Malta rather than on more established flows and destinations, and care has been taken to position this thesis firmly within the current theorization of lifestyle mobilities and link it to the larger perspective of geographical thinking on migration, mobility, and place attachment.

Theoretical framework

Definitions and concepts

In order to outline the theoretical framework and situate the thesis firmly within the research agenda, I will first discuss some central definitions and theoretical concepts, and explain how they have been used in this thesis.

Space and place

Space and place are, obviously, central concepts within geography. Indeed, the centrality of place and space in geography is of such a nature that their meanings and implications often been taken for granted when they have been applied in research and debates. The ways space and place are understood tell something about the spatial arrangement of society – space and place make up the contexts within which people live their daily lives, ordinarily and extraordinarily. They tell something about how people understand the worlds they live and act in, and how this understanding influences the choices they make about how to live and act in those worlds:

> "Things, ideas, practices, and emotions all occur in a context, in a broader world that influences, values, celebrates, regulates, criminalizes, sneers or tuts at particular activities and objects. [...] Context can influence what actions we choose to make and how we choose to make them, it can influence how these actions are judged by ourselves and others, and thus how successful and significant they turn out to be" (Anderson 2010:1).

The concept of space is perhaps the more abstract of the two; it is not always clearly defined in the academic debate, however there has been a shift in the debate from the standpoint of an absolute spatial perception (space is assigned its own existence, but vacuumed and abstracted from the human sphere; space simply is) toward a relational spatial awareness (social relations and processes give meaning to space) (Massey 2005). A relational awareness of space is necessary for a deeper understanding of the connections between people, places and events. However, a careless conflation of the concepts of space and place has sometimes led to an overly simplified distinction between them: "in contrast to space, places are meaningful, they root people both geographically and socially" (Anderson 2010:38). In this distinction, the relational awareness of space is disqualified in favour of a relational awareness of places. Instead, Massey (2005) proposed three ways to define space: 1) space as the product of

interrelations; 2) heterogeneous space inhabited by coexisting multiplicity; and 3) space as process, carrying out of material and immaterial practices.

However, places are after all more meaningful to individuals in their daily lives than the concept of space, and "everything that we study is emplaced" (Gieryn 2000:466). My understanding of place, in relation to space, is greatly influenced by Massey's discussion of social and interrelated space, and the conceptualizations of place proposed by Agnew (1987): that places might be defined by their (geographical) location, and ascribed with material form (locale), and specific meanings and values (sense of place). Places are defined and delimited, they contain some sort of material settings or context for social relations, and as they are experienced by people they are associated with subjective and objective emotions people have in relation to places. Places may then be understood as nodes of social relations in space (Massey 1994). This implies that relations between places (stretched social relations) are dependent upon the interrelations of space. Thus, we can understand why certain elements of the good life might be recognized in different places, how they can be related and tailored into an individual's unique trajectory, and how this tailoring is made possible through interrelated spatialized and localized processes and relationships. It has also been argued that places are to be understood as socially constructed, as products made by the societies that inhabit them (Massey 1995); or in other words, the physical, economic and social realities of places are interpreted, understood and produced socially (Easthope 2004). Since contemporary societies are generally understood to be dynamic and heterogeneous, it follows that places are constantly produced and reproduced in everyday practices; they may even be understood as individual or collective projects (Gustafson 2001). In other words, places are "dynamic and evolving: places are ongoing compositions of traces. Places then are not 'nouns' – they are not fixed and solid things; rather, they are 'verbs', they are doings, and they are always active" (Anderson 2010:51-2).

However, even though space should be regarded as interrelated and social relations as stretched out in space according to this interrelatedness, one should be wary of assuming that connections stretch everywhere in space; in reality they are limited by inequality, borders, power disparities and other barriers. In this thesis, the issue of spatial power is relevant in mainly two respects. One relates to freedom of movement (Bauman 1998) and relative affluence (Benson and O'Reilly 2009b), and how the unequal dispersion of power and resources leads to different opportunities to make choices about lifestyle. This will be further elaborated on below. The other respect in which spatial power is relevant in this thesis is how it relates to representations and how, by whom, and for what purposes places are assigned identities.

Spatialized representations, i.e. socially constructed imaginaries of places, often reflect wider power geometries (Massey 1993); the ways places are imagined and positioned are mainly assigned through the 'powerful' voices that can enforce an interpretation. Laws' (1997) review of the identity formation of Sun City, Palm Springs illustrates some of these power relations: a group of key stakeholders ('powerful' voices) actively create discursive representations of place that shape the expectations and behaviour of potential customers, while other representations ('powerless' voices) are toned down:

> "This identity has been actively constructed over the past two decades as business interests recognized the windfall available to them through the private pensions and social security benefits negotiated during the post-war economic boom. [A firm] and many other businesses have worked hard to construct a discursive identity that people would adopt in their material lives. Real estate developers have been particularly cognizant of the need to spatialize these identities in order to make their own projects profitable. As these identities are constructed and adopted by an increasing number of people, demand for lifestyle retirement communities also increases" (Laws 1997:97-8).

Here, lifestyle mobility is represented as an extension of the tourism industry, and celebrated as economically beneficial. Likewise, Torkington (2013) has demonstrated how an attractive destination, the 'Golden Triangle', is discursively constructed in place by estate agents in the Algarve region of Portugal. This is done by shaping the linguistic landscape, for instance through billboard advertisement, reinforcing an image of exclusivity, luxury and privilege directed at the foreign lifestyle migrants settling in the area.

The understanding of places as socially constructed also allows for an interpretation of the organization of space as a social product (Soja 1989). Following this, Soja described the 'socio-spatial dialectic', which implies that "social relations of production are both space-forming and space-contingent" (1989:81); i.e. that the social construction of space is influenced by social practices, but at the same time the ways space is socially constructed also alter the ways social practices are conducted. This is relevant here for explaining how the organization of space creates or challenges opportunities for performing lifestyle mobilities, and can be exemplified in three ways. First, social relations are constituted through space; for example, a certain type of community will develop within the specific context of a living environment (such as a 'residential tourism' development). Second, social relations are constrained by space; for example the opportunities of

integration with host societies that immigrants can access will depend upon the spatial context of those host societies. Third, social relations are mediated by space; for example, the ways moorings are kept among people moving through space will be mediated by the material and immaterial links that exist between places.

Mobilities

Mobility, i.e. the overcoming of spatial distance, is a central theme of this thesis. The field of mobility research has undergone a tremendous upsurge in the early 21st century, its agenda mainly set by the publication of textbooks such as *Sociology Beyond Societies* (Urry 2000), *On the Move* (Cresswell 2006), and *Mobilities* (Urry 2007), and by the establishment in 2006 of the cross-disciplinary journal *Mobilities* (edited by Hannam, Sheller, and Urry). Even though mobility is rather new as a defined field of research, it is naturally a given issue of geographical enquiry; one of the basic aspects of spatial processes, and notably transport, tourism, and population geography has greatly involved the drivers, opportunities, limitations, and outcomes of human mobility. This development has been especially prominent during the late 20th and early 21st centuries, as the discipline of geography has undergone shifts such as the 'mobilities turn', and a move toward a focus on transnationalism (King 2012). Indeed, mobility has been referred to as the 'dynamic equivalent of place' (Cresswell 2006:3). However, a traditional view of mobility is as a disturbing and 'uprooting' phenomenon. Some debaters have even bemoaned the expected 'end of geography' in relation to the increasing speed and reach of mobilities, forecasting a future devaluation of place; a 'placelessness' (Relph 1976).

However, even though a great deal of earlier geographical research has favoured a sedentarist perspective, some commentators early on acknowledged the creative values of movement and mobility. Zelinsky (1971) noted the speeding up of interconnections between places and hypothesized the mobility transition, comprising five stages of increased mobility based on historical generalizations about social changes, migration patterns, modernization and the development of societies. Zelinsky's ideas were quite before his time as he actually 'predicted', as the last stage of his transition theory (superadvanced society), the forthcoming 'mobilities turn' a few decades in advance (King 2012). Another significant commentator was Hägerstrand (1975), who introduced the concept of time-geography with a strong emphasis on individual mobility trajectories and biographical research methods. Hägerstrand (1987) defined mobility as movement of individuals, or groups of individuals, from the widened perspective of people, labour, material, capital and thought. Mobility, hence, is not only a

matter of the physical movement of a human being but comprises all sorts of contact and exchange between humans over spatial distance. Hägerstrand (1987) defined three aspects of mobility: 1) the physical (corporeal) movement of the human body or other materials; 2) virtual two-way mobility, facilitated by information and communication technology (ICT); and 3) the one-way mediated mobility of images and information. While the first represents the most obvious and concrete form of movement, the latter two add the more abstract 'mobility of thought': the movement of words, images and sounds without the requirement of face-to-face meetings. With the advancement of technology, mobility has increasingly speeded up, immensely escalating the range and frequency of contact. Today we are able to move – physically or electronically – further, faster and more often than ever before. Especially the advancements in ICT have allowed for virtual multi-tasking and even multiple co-presences (Kellerman 2006), i.e. movement in several directions at the same time.

The formation of a distinct field of mobilities studies emerged as a response to this 'speeding-up' of mobilities in society, and the increased emphasis on mobilities within the social sciences has been referred to as the mobilities 'turn' or 'paradigm'. The mobilities paradigm encompasses "studies of corporeal movement, transportation and communication, capitalist spatial restructuring, migration and immigration, citizenship and transnationalism, and tourism and travel" (Urry 2007:47), and as such draws substantially from a wide range of disciplines within the social sciences. One basic theme within the mobilities paradigm is the notion of mobility as socially produced motion: "mobile people are never simply people – they are dancers and pedestrians, drivers and athletes, refugees and citizens, tourists or businesspeople, men and women" (Cresswell 2006:4), and this theme is explored from a production of mobilities (mobility in relation to structural frameworks) perspective and a performance of mobilities (mobility in relation to agency and meaning) perspective.

In contemporary societies, mobility can be said to 'be everywhere'; the same can also be said about power, and especially about the inequality with which both mobility and power are dispersed. While studying mobility and the structures shaping it, one must therefore consider the issue of freedom of movement (Bauman 1998; Gustafson 2002). One important statement that needs to be made here is that individuals simply do not have the same access to, or ability to perform, mobility. This disparity in 'degree of mobility' (Bauman 1998:86) depends on both structural context and individual capability and allocation of resources. The degree of mobility depends on accessibility in terms of physical, social, financial and political structures, such as political rights and status, social class, ethnicity and gender, access to

networks, profession/work, health, and education. Mobility has usually been understood as motivated by a derived demand (Banister 2008) related to specific needs. These needs can be categorized into three levels – must, can, and want – and are motivators for mobility change according to material standard and level of technological development. Following globalization the opportunities for mobility are several, and among the more affluent the access to means of transport is facilitated. This means that not only are the basic needs for movement satisfied, but additional 'needs' like leisure and variation are as well. The demand for mobility is thus not possible to describe simply as derived demand caused by needs; it is demanded by the accumulated motivations of modern societal structures. Mobility, especially speedy and comfortable movement, may become a valued activity rather than a derived demand, a sign of status and well-being rather than a must for survival. Freedom of movement, Gustafson (2002) argues, implies freedom of choice – it is about having access to places and being able choose when, where and why to move; when, where and why to stay; and how to develop ties to certain places. Among the more affluent, mobility may indeed be not only accessible but also used as a resource in its own right to access a greater personal freedom of choice (Ackers and Dwyer 2004), while for others it may be either restricted or hindered, or forced.

Place attachments

Places, as meaningful locations, are obviously imbued with feelings of connection or attachment. Tuan (1974) coined the term topophilia, which symbolizes the affective bond that exists between people and place, and which also produces meanings of places for people through their lived experiences in place. The most profound place attachment is often assigned to the 'home place'; however, the nature of place attachments can vary greatly. As the term suggests, place attachment refers to the bonds individuals and groups tie to certain places based on their affection (emotions) for those places. However, as Low and Altman (1992) argue, place attachment comprises several interrelated aspects and is thus also based on cognition (thought, knowledge, belief) and practice (behaviour and action). In other words, the bonds connecting people to places do not always have to be related to feelings of belonging or imply affectionate feelings toward the place, but can also be based on practical or strategic considerations.

The sedentarist perspective evident in much early geographical research has also been influential in early discussions of place attachment, as it was understood to be possible to create ties to places only if people did not move too much. For example, Tuan argued that "place is an organized world of

meaning. It is essentially a static concept. If we see the world as process, constantly changing, we should not be able to develop any sense of place" (1977:179). When the reach and pace of mobility started to pick up, early globalization theory also revolved along these lines of argument. Jameson (1991) regarded the post-modern culture as depthless, unanchored in time and place, and dependent on superficial signs. This, he argued, would lead to the deprivation of the true meanings of places, and Augé (1995) continued this argument, referring to 'superficial' places like shopping malls and airport terminals as 'non-places'. Gustafson (2002) noted that according to such 'container' understandings of place and people, then, place attachment and mobility are understood as opposites along a continuum; either more place attachment or more mobility implies less of the other. This perspective has also influenced much of the classical perspective on migration research, especially the long-established assimilation theory (e.g. Gordon 1964), assuming a gradual integration or adaptation of migrants into the new settlement in favour of the culture of origin. This implies an understanding of migration as primarily a unidirectional movement whereby return, exchange, and circulation are exceptions to the norm.

From the mid-1990s, however, a changing view on place and mobility started developing (e.g. Massey 1994) as scholars began to describe new forms of connection to place in relation to mobility, whereby the local is not seen as transcended by globalization but is rather to be understood through the lens of global relationships (Savage et al. 2005). In response to sedentarist perspectives on place and mobility, one thread of research developed into the aforementioned mobilities paradigm, and in the celebration of the individual freedom of movement (Bauman 1998; 2000). However, an overt exaggeration of the flux of society ignores that places and place attachments matter. Conradson and Latham emphasize that research on mobilities should also consider emplacement, the emplaced corporealities that are crucial even to the most hyper-mobile of individuals:

> "they eat; they sleep; they have families who must be raised, educated and taught a set of values. They have friends to keep up with and relatives to honour [...] An investigation of the life-worlds of these mobile individuals, and the activities which constitute them, thus provides a useful counterpoint to the inflationary tendencies of some writings on globalization" (2005:228-9).

Within migration research especially, the importance of connections between places is emphasized, as linkages between sending and receiving areas have been evidenced repeatedly (e.g. Boyle et al. 1998; Castles and Miller 2003). The limits of the assimilation theory have become rather

obvious as its application to contemporary mobility patterns is increasingly problematic (Dunn 2005), and therefore, the concept of transnationalism has been emerging since the beginning of the 1990s (e.g. Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Ong 1998; Vertovec 1999; Portes et al. 1999). Transnationalism has been described as a new imaginary of migration studies (Crang et al. 2003), focusing not on relocation per se but on the international links that are created and maintained following movement across international borders. As such, transnationalism has been suggested as an umbrella concept; a transnationalism paradigm, which in population and migration studies especially offers a renewed vista for the holistic theorizing of movement (Dunn 2005).

Transnationalism has been defined as the study of the "multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec 1999:447). The emphasis on sustained linkages implies that routinized and normative connections are important criteria for transnationalism (Portes et al. 1999). A set of conditions for the facilitation of transnationalism has been identified: the developments in technological and transport infrastructures; political and economic structural frameworks facilitating movement; and social structures, i.e. the presence of networks (Portes et al. 1999). Kastoryano (2000) added affective conditions related to place, for example nostalgia, patriotism, obligations or intimacy, and facilitating ideological structures, for example, multiculturalism and neo-liberalism. Multiculturalism is also understood as an outcome of transnationalism, as the increasing rate and reach of transnational connections may produce 'transnational syncretism', meaning the emergence of new cultural expressions and mixed identities (Faist 2000; Gustafson 2002). From the perspective of places as areas of 'throwntogetherness' (Massey 2005) of different cultures, mindsets, identities and expressions, areas with a high degree of transnational infrastructures and elements can be understood as 'transnational social spaces/fields' (Pries 2001; Gustafson 2002), or as 'hybrid' places (Faist 2000). Destinations attracting large numbers of temporal and seasonal lifestyle movers are good examples of transnational social spaces, as the ties individuals keep to both places are naturally maintained and reinforced as the mover travels back and forth, sustaining both the ties in their place of origin and new ones created at the destination. In this way, lifestyle movers become "a truly 'transnational' community" (Casado-Diaz 2012:123). Furthermore, they not only produce and reproduce relationships and connections between sending and receiving places, they "also develop individual and collective identities that refer to more than one place or nation-state" (Gustafson 2002:33).

In areas where lifestyle movers concentrate, a specific social structure is developed and maintained through the social networks, information channels and meeting points where movers can exchange news, experiences and advice. This lifestyle mobility context also contains structures developed by business sectors, organizations and governments with an interest in capitalizing on this type of mobility. These structures often contain strong transnational elements, as both social and professional networks stretch across borders, thus both facilitating and influencing movement. Many countries now allow the issuing of dual citizenship, and there has been a great deal of discussion on the strategic acquisition of citizenship in order to access beneficial entitlements (Blunt 2007). Critical commentators argue that nations may be tempted to promote citizenship as a commodity (Ip et al. 1997), attracting 'flexible citizens' (Ong 1998), affluent multiple passport holders leading highly mobilized lives on a global scale. A main criticism has been the notion that these highly flexible individuals "do not develop a strong symbolic attachment or nationalist loyalty" (Dunn 2005:19); thus they would not contribute substantially at the local level. However, formal attachment is not limited to citizenship only; other levels of formal fixity in place can also significantly influence transnational linkages and the practices of mobility, such as property ownership and permanent residency status. As Preston et al. argue, "there is a need for a more detailed understanding of the relationships between transnationalism and citizenship participation" (2006:1633).

Identity, reflexivity, lifestyle

For conceptual purposes, lifestyle and identity can be understood as twin concepts, in that lifestyles are defined in relation to identification processes on different levels (Jensen 2007). However, while identity has undergone rather rigorous theorization, the term lifestyle is often used quite unreflectively in both academic and public discourse, and there has been little endeavour to come to a definitional consensus about lifestyle as a concept.

The idea of identity as socially constructed has been prominent in late-modern thought, and one way of describing the identification process is through the lens of collective identity construction and narrativity; i.e. how individuals and groups of individuals talk about and represent themselves through telling stories. In this view identification becomes a social event, and is thus understood as constantly negotiated, tested, reinforced and reconstructed (Gutting 1996). Within geography, place is also understood to be closely related to the identification process (Gutting 1996; Massey 2005), not least when it comes to the idea of the nation-state (Gregory et al. 2011).

This interrelationship between place and identity is assumed both subjectively, in that the individual constructs a sense of identity through a sense of belonging in place (Feldman 1990), and objectively as particular 'categories' of people can be associated with particular locations: "identities are spatialized, in that where we are says a lot about who we are. There are pervasive links between social and spatial positions; we hold 'geographically specific' stereotypes of people because there are equally powerful stereotypes of places" (Laws 1997:93).

As contemporary societies have been increasingly characterized by mobility and stretched relationships, the idea of a grounded place-identity has been re-conceptualized. Advocates of the mobilities paradigm prefer to view identities as formed not by attachment to and belonging in place, but through the lived experiences of moving in space (e.g. Urry 2000). This view lies close to the way identity is positioned in this thesis. However, as I do not view mobility and place attachment as opposite and exclusive phenomena, I argue that flow and fixity are intertwined; identity is developed and sustained by the lived experiences of belonging in place, *and* of moving through and connecting to new places, people, events and things. Following this argument, identity should also be understood as multifaceted, multivoiced, and represented differently in different contexts (Kraus 2006).

The term lifestyle is frequently used in everyday public discourse, and is often related to the need to change behaviour (Elliott and Lemert 2006); we are told to lead healthy, active and inspiring lifestyles, consume housing and fashion, and travel in certain ways. This overload of mediation and promotion of lifestyle choices, sometimes referred to as 'hyper-reality' (Baudrillard 1983,) has been connected to an interpretation of contemporary societies and identity construction as fragmented (Kraus 2006). Elliott and Lemert also talk about a disappearance of context within modern societies, resulting in a need for individuals to 'produce context' for themselves: "the designing of life, of a self-project, is deeply rooted as both social norm and cultural obligation" (2006:13). This argument is central to Giddens' notion of the 'reflexive awareness' needed by human beings in contemporary society: "to be a human being is to know, virtually all of the time, in terms of some description or another, both what one is doing and why one is doing it" (1991:35). Lifestyle choice, thus, is not simply an opportunity among the more affluent groups in society but is becoming something demanded of us; we are expected to reflect upon our choices, upon how we identify ourselves, and upon how we choose to express this identity.

Lifestyle has been defined as the "distinctive pattern of personal and social behavior characteristic of an individual or a group" (Veal 1993:247), which is

either subjectively or objectively identified. Early definitions of lifestyle were often related to the acknowledgement of status or power among certain groups in society (e.g. Weber 1948; Scheys 1987). This is not to suggest that only groups with status or power may be ascribed lifestyle markers, but rather that by studying lifestyle we can untangle "the very mechanism through which differential power is wielded in society" (Veal 1993:235); the lifestyles of less privileged groups in society have been studied from the perspective of structural restraints and individual agency. Emphasizing freedom of choice, or rather the lack thereof, in relation to the 'life context', i.e. the framework of everyday activities, family life, paid and unpaid labour etc., Friberg (1990) situated the 'life forms' of women in relation to power inequalities and delimiting structures in society, and explored different strategies they adopted to negotiate their choice of lifestyle. Her research took a pluralistic point of departure; by describing both objective understandings of female 'life forms' and women's own self-identification, Friberg argued that research needs to be sensitive to the heterogeneity within larger groups in society. Friberg also noted how representations of self, in the form of symbolic attributes and ways of being (active), were represented through, e.g., consumption. Links between consumerism and lifestyle have been the focus of much research (e.g. Veal 1993; Jensen 2007), and the concept of lifestyle has often been applied in marketing efforts.

The pluralistic approach to the concept of lifestyle suggested by Friberg have been recognized among scholars (e.g. Bell and Hollows 2005; Jensen 2007), acknowledging not only the heterogeneity within society but also that one individual can, through different practices, express his or her identity through multiple lifestyles. Lifestyle is a central concept in this thesis, as both a theoretical underpinning and a framework for analysis. The conceptualization of *lifestyle* mobilities has multiple meanings. It refers to mobilities driven by lifestyle values and lifestyle promotion in an applied sense; the activities people choose to perform out of a desire to lead interesting, healthy, comfortable and fulfilling lives, and how these values are mediated through social networks as well as through media and by governments and professional agents. It also refers to an identification process related to the ways individuals position themselves in relation to their place attachments, their desires to make new connections and experience new things, their urge for change, motion and flexibility, and their needs for continuity and belonging. Mobility is one resource by which these lifestyle values can be translated into performed lifestyles, responding to the self-identification of the movers (for example as flexible, capable, curious, and in control), and in itself mobility can also become a significant part of these lifestyles.

Jensen (2007) suggested four levels of analysis that have been useful in structuring the implications of identity and lifestyle on different geographical scales. On the global level, this has allowed for an understanding of how discourses on global structures have positioned certain areas of the world as places of demand, and others as places of consumption, in the mental maps of lifestyle movers. On the structural/national level, it relates to how places and imaginings of places wound up with ideas of national or cultural identity and ways of life, and how this 'placed' identity relates to feelings of belonging, recognition and safety – or to feelings of limitation, estrangement and suspicion. On the positional/sub-cultural level, it helps explain the ways movers position themselves in relation to 'Other' groups, and by this how they make sense of their own values, defend their own choices concerning lifestyle, and negotiate their own sense of identity. On the individual level, it reflects how lifestyle movers negotiate their freedom of choice in relation to their self-identity as, for example, flexible or capable individuals, and in relation to habits that may limit or reinforce this self-identity. It also relates to the strong influence of feedback, and the importance of ontological security (Giddens 1984); how the movers' strategies contest, and are shaped by, socially constructed norms within society, and how their choices are influenced by the actions and reactions of friends, family and an extended network of actors.

Home and belonging

Even in a world highly shaped by mobilities and mobility processes, place attachments, senses of belonging and senses of 'home' play a crucial role in how individuals identify themselves (e.g. Heidegger 1971; Prohansky et al. 1983; Massey 1995; Easthope 2004). But what is 'home'? In popular media, in scientific debates, in public discourse, references to home and home places have always been prominent. According to traditional understandings in geography (e.g. Relph 1976; Tuan 1977), home is located, singular, and conflated with identity, roots, security, and ideal notions of intimate family life. However, in accordance with an increasingly interrelational and open perspective upon the meanings of place and space, the notions of the sedentary home place are being challenged. More and more, scholars prefer to view home as porous and multi-scalar (Blunt and Dowling 2006), and as being given meaning through the social and emotional relationships that are sustained by the lived experience of home (Massey 1991; 2005). In other words, "homes can be understood as 'places' that hold considerable social, psychological and emotive meaning for individuals and for groups" (Easthope 2004:135). In this rendering, home is understood as "a complex and multi-layered geographical concept. Put most simply, home is: a place/site, a set of feelings/cultural meanings, and the relations between the

two" (Blunt and Dowling 2006:2-3). Home can relate to different scales; it can comprise the dwelling unit, the neighbourhood block, the city, region or country, but it is not necessarily confined to place. It is also understood in a more abstract way as the sets of feelings and emotions that stem from the social relations one has in a given place, or along the routes between places. Different places are also understood to hold different meanings of home; such as the worksite-home, the family/birthplace-home, the leisure-home and so on. Homes can also change meaning when the social relations in place change dynamically: as Mallet points out, "the term home functions as a repository for complex, inter-related and at times contradictory socio-cultural ideas about people's relationship with one another, especially family, and with places, spaces, and things" (2004:84). This view is achieving recognition; however, there is still a general tendency to understand home as singular. Even though research on second homes and temporary forms of migration is gaining ground, there is still a prevailing notion within migration and housing studies and related fields that people have and relate to home places in a hierarchical order (Gallent 2007).

My understanding of home is strongly influenced by the perspective of social space; with this I want to emphasize the interrelational aspects of space and place, and the ambiguity or contradictions that often result from these interrelations. This becomes extra significant when movers are attached to and have feelings of home for more than one place at a time. A more nuanced picture of home can be achieved by relating it to the concept of belonging. Here I use two approaches: belonging in place, relating to the home as place or site; and social belonging, relating to those meaningful social ties or relationships that are associated with home. An obvious understanding of 'belonging in place' relates to the located home place, the dwelling one can call home, and thus belonging in place has to do with having a dwelling in which to live. Heidegger celebrated dwelling as the "basic character of Being" (1971:8), and argued that dwelling is only attained by building. This argument poses an important implication for my understanding of home as belonging in place. The argument that home is something that needs to be attained implies that engagement is required of the mover – feelings of being at home in a place do not just happen but must be achieved. By engaging in home-making practices, we develop feelings of home through the structuring of our environment and the placing of our things that house not only our bodies but also the everyday activities we perform and that express our lifestyle and identity. By building and dwelling, people also mark in the landscape a claim on this corner of the world as their home (Rose 2012).

However, in this thesis belonging in place does not only refer to the dwelling itself ('house-as-home'; Blunt and Dowling 2006), but encompasses a wider scale. A homely place can refer to a street or neighbourhood, a city or region or even a country; in my studies it is obvious that the movers refer to many geographical scales when they talk about home places. Feelings of belonging in place may thus be related to experiences or senses of familiarity: a cultural or natural landscape, memories or 'roots', signs or symbols, seasons and climate, traditions, scents, sights, sounds and tastes. Also on a wider scale, belonging is related to engagement. Müller (1999) argued that participation in local events and the routinized use of local services and products imply a deep engagement or integration within the host society in a second home setting. This was also illustrated by some of my respondents when they described their endeavours in 'getting to know' their new home (Paper IV).

Engaging is also key when it comes to social belonging, as social relationships in place must be sustained and nurtured continuously. Saunders and Williams suggested that the home may be viewed as a socio-spatial entity in which the 'physical unit of the house' comes together with the 'social unit of the household' (1988:83). Here the household is seen as the basic foundation of social belonging; however, in this thesis a more inclusive perspective is favoured, as connections to wider social networks may also imply feelings of belonging. Following her earlier conceptualization of places as social constructs, Massey (1995) strengthens the idea of engagement in her claim that we actively make places, and as such, the ideas we form about places are products of the society in which we live and belong. This is based on the notion of 'open place', the sense of which is maintained and developed through the social relations that stretch beyond it (also allowing for home places to be spatially flexible). Casado-Diaz (2009), developing Putnam's (2000) idea of bonding and bridging social capital in a transnational context, described how semi-permanent British lifestyle migrants in Spain engaged in 'making' social belonging by seeking out formal and informal forms of social connections. These connections are either cross-cutting, bringing people from different cultural backgrounds together (bridging social capital), or exclusive and based on mutual understanding and collective identity (bonding social capital). Bonding social capital is most closely related to feelings of home; however, bridging social capital is important for 'social home-making' since it may, over time, be transformed into bonding social capital as relationships grow stronger.

Theorizing lifestyle mobilities

Tourism and migration links

Temporary mobility, Bell and Ward argue, "is perhaps most readily defined as the complement of permanent migration: that is, as any form of territorial movement which does not represent a permanent, or lasting, change of usual residence" (2000:97-8). Tourism has usually been defined by what it is not – i.e. not work, not home, and not permanent – and some temporal limits are common, such as trips of at least 24 hours or overnight stays. Another way of defining tourism is based on the underlying motivation: usually to consume experiences, relax or engage in recreation. However, as both the time aspect and the consumption/production distinction is are becoming increasingly blurred these definitions are growing more and more elusive, and thus the interrelations and intersections between tourism and migration have been noted during the past couple of decades. Hall and Williams outlined tourism and migration relationships in a sequential model, suggesting that "the phenomena are related through a series of economic and cultural mechanisms" (2002:8) such as labour demand, social networks, investment opportunities and return migration, and "may become locked into a circle of growth" (ibid.) as development proceeds. Thus, it is acknowledged that many forms of contemporary mobilities are induced by tourism history and tourism systems (Cuba 1989; O'Reilly 2003). Müller (1999) and Rodríguez (2001) suggested that tourism can be seen as a 'stepping stone' to longer term mobility and migration, as people become attached to places where they have had pleasant touristic experiences. This may come about through increasingly prolonged visits, in the form of second home ownership, seasonal migration and subsequently full migration.

Even though a great deal of migration research has explained movement based on labour and political factors (e.g. Castles and Miller 2003), studies have also focused on migration in which labour has not been considered a main motivator. At the beginning of the 1970s, population researchers acknowledged an unanticipated population growth in non-metropolitan areas, which stood in sharp contrast to the population change in earlier decades. This tendency contradicted the better understood trends of urbanization, and was generally termed counterurbanization (e.g. Berry 1976). The definition, extent and drivers of the phenomenon have since been extensively debated, however among the more oft-suggested motivations for counterurbanization was the idea that it is driven by a romanticized imaginary of the countryside and notions of lower quality of life in crammed cityscapes. Some general characteristics of 'counterurbanites' have also been

suggested (even though great diversity has been noted, making this somewhat elusive; see for example Lindgren 2003 and Halfacree 2008): relative affluence; higher levels of self-employment post-migration; middle-aged and retired migrants; house owners rather than renters; households of two or more people; and finally that migrants are usually not returning to their 'roots' but rather often originate from nearby locations (Halfacree 2008). This characterization, however stereotypical, fits well with discussions about opportunities for lifestyle choice presenting the issue of lifestyle in explanations of population mobility. This is summed up by Champion, in his claim that "to be a true 'counterurbanite' a person, or household, not only has to take up residence in a remote rural area but also has to assume a lifestyle which, if not identical with the traditional rural way of life, should essentially be the modern equivalent of it" (1989:27). Thus, counterurbanization has also been related to a trend of escapism evident in (post-)modern societies.

Whereas counterurbanization can include the mobility of individuals who are still productive in the labour force, retirement migration is obviously not driven by labour, even though there can be strong economic reasons for this mobility – such as the need for cheaper living. A great deal of research on the mobility patterns of ageing populations has addressed return migration (e.g. Warnes 1993; Lundholm 2012) or moves closer to family members (e.g. Hjälm 2010). However, there has been an increased interest in tourism-, or leisure-induced, forms of retirement mobilities (Cuba 1989; King et al. 2000; Casado-Diaz 2006). With reference to the increasing living standards, better health and longer life span, and greater disposable income during the earlier part of retirement which is evident in many modern societies, Laslett (1989; 1996) described the emergence of a Third Age in the human life cycle (see also Warnes 1993). This Third Age is suggested to mark the time of life when restraints of responsibilities such as work hours and care for dependants no longer restrict the individual from focusing on personal development and fulfilment (Laslett 1996). As such, the Third Age, while not strictly related to calendar age, usually coincides with retirement, and is facilitated by structural frameworks which have been developed to cater for their needs. 'Young-old' retirees are thus provided with greater freedom when it comes to lifestyle choice and searching for the good life. This cohort also has more experience of travel than earlier generations, and the past couple of decades have seen an increase in international retirement migration (IRM) from the north to sunny destinations (King et al. 2000; Oliver 2008; 2010).

In-between mobilities

Increased attention is now turning toward studying the intersections and interrelations of the many different types of lifestyle-led mobilities. There is increasing acknowledgement that the underlying motives and aspirations driving many contemporary mobility flows are consumption-oriented, seeking experiences, variation, self-transformation, health and so on – which can be summarized as a search for quality of life. Seeking this, individuals undertake both temporal and long-term mobilities, and often alternate between being travelers, workers, migrants and multiple dwellers (O'Reilly 2003; 2007a), and fluid mobilities sometimes 'tip into' the everyday (e.g. Cohen 2011; Cohen et al. 2013). Thus, contemporary mobilities can in many ways be claimed to be 'in-between', and of a fluid and flexible nature.

One example of in-between mobilities is multiple dwelling (McIntyre et al. 2006) or the home-away-from-home, bordering and at the same time challenging the distinctions between tourism and migration. Various forms of multiple dwelling are noted, and the phenomenon has variously been referred to as second home tourism, residential tourism and semi-permanent or seasonal migration (Coppock 1977; Hall and Müller 2004; Rodríguez et al. 1998; O'Sullivan and Stevens 1982). People utilize multiple homes for many reasons, not only related to leisure or lifestyle values; however, the search for quality of life is often prominent, and the field within which this has been most thoroughly studied is the research on second homes. Second homes are spaces where people escape to relax, engage in outdoor recreation, and pause from the stress and restraints of everyday life. They are also spaces with which individuals feel strong connections and experience senses of nostalgia and belonging, and where they even may become more emotionally attached than their primary place of residence (Hall and Müller 2004). Thus, second homes are spaces between the ordinary and the extraordinary (Aronsson 2004), and the use of second homes can be seen as a form of consumption of experiences and environment (Chaplin 1999), and as a way to 'produce context' (Elliott and Lemert 2006) beyond the everyday.

The area of second home tourism has attracted interdisciplinary interest in many different areas of the world. In North America, the phenomenon of 'snowbirds' was described in the early 80s (O'Sullivan and Stevens 1982) as seasonal migration from the northern to the southern states ('Sunbelt States'), performed predominantly by retirees. This routinized mobility was related to activity-based lifestyle choices, and the utilization of travel trailers and mobile homes emphasizes the highly mobilized aspect of the phenomenon. International second homes have attracted increasing

academic interest in recent decades. Rodriguez et al. (1998) studied the rapid growth in tourism-led acquisition of holiday homes at the littoral of southern Spain, referred to as 'residential tourism'. This type of second home use has been heavily induced by mass tourism, and along the coastlines of the Mediterranean, most heavily developed in Spain, 'urbanizations' populated by northern Europeans have been developed. Research has focused on effects upon host destinations, the (non-)integration of movers, and the ways this phenomenon can be understood as an extension of the tourism industry (Mazón 2006; Mazón et al. 2009; Huete et al. 2008). These centrally located and top-modern, high-rise types of second homes stand in sharp contrast to, for example, the rural Norwegian 'hytte', the Swedish 'stuga' or the Finnish 'mökki'; however, rural locations have also attracted international movers. For example, Müller (1999) noted the popularity of German second home ownership in rural Sweden, motivated by mediated imaginations of the destination as a rural 'paradise', drawn from tourism promotion, literature and poetry. Similarly, feelings of a 'lost' rurality in the home countries have motivated British citizens to take up more or less permanent residence in rural France (Buller and Hoggart 1994; Benson 2011), as has also been noted among Dutch in rural Sweden (Eimermann et al. 2012). Lipkina (forthcoming) and Lipkina and Hall (2013) found that motives for Russians to purchase second homes in the Finnish Lake District are based mainly on the amenities of the area, but also on an imagination of the destination as safe and conflict-free. In contrast, Pitkänen (2011) noted that the perspective of the host society has given rise to conflicting imaginaries of the same region in relation to foreign second home ownership.

Towards a new understanding of (lifestyle) mobilities

For the purposes of this thesis, lifestyle mobilities are defined as those mobility practices undertaken by individuals based on their freedom of choice, of a temporal or more permanent duration, with or without any significant 'home base(s)', that are primarily driven by aspirations to increase quality of life, and that are primarily related to the individuals' lifestyle values. Given the great variance in lifestyle-led mobility that the literature suggests, and the global scope on which the phenomena have been witnessed, this definition is intentionally rather unspecific. The ways lifestyle mobilities are produced and performed are highly contextualized and individualized. Lifestyle-related drivers and aspirations to seek out quality of life form a basic factor within this definition, implying that a certain degree of freedom of choice and relative affluence allowing this freedom must be present. The definition also allows the inclusion of different spatial and temporal forms of mobility, and periodical alteration between them (O'Reilly 2003). Furthermore, it is sensitive to the possibility of multiple place

attachments, and at the same time to states of flux and fluid mobility practices (Gustafson 2002). This way of re-conceptualizing human physical movements, away from a distinction between different temporary variations such as tourism and migration and toward a time-space continuum of mobility, is analytically attractive "not least because it gets away from the old chestnut of space-time thresholds for deciding what is and what is not migration" (King 2012:136).

The search for the good life has often been described as a main motivating factor, and one finding in this thesis is the way the movers understand the good life as fragmented and dispersed; elements of quality of life can be found in different places at different times. Therefore, mobility becomes an important resource or practice used in order to access and tailor the good life. However, moving away implies some losses: of the primary dwelling in Sweden, of close and spontaneous contact with family and friends, of place-based amenities and of local services and products. Some ties that have been built up in place over a long time must be stretched out or even cut, and many movers express ambiguous feelings about this perceived (even if temporary) loss of some elements of the good life. This tension leads to a wish to 'have one's cake and eat it too', and this is where the individual agency and tailoring activities become central. From the perspective of the Swedish retirees in Malta, in many instances the search for quality of life is a search for 'the best of both worlds', and the relationship between the significance of different meaningful places and the urge for mobility is often expressed with ambiguity. Thus, the search for quality of life includes a constant search for balance between mobility and moorings. In a recent blog post, O'Reilly commented that this ambiguity might in itself be an attraction:

> "Somewhere can only be exotic, exciting, different, challenging, as long as it remains other [...] the only way to retain both a sense of otherness and a sense of commitment to somewhere is to balance one place with or against another" (O'Reilly, The Lifestyle Migration Hub Blog 2012-09-23)

Similarly, Gustafson (2001) noted that one major element of quality of life among Swedes in Spain was variation; being able to change environment, experience new and exciting things, and have a break from the everyday – not only in Sweden but also in Spain.

McIntyre also included in the idea of lifestyle mobilities "the movements of people, capital, information and objects associated with the process of voluntary relocation to places that are perceived as providing an enhanced or, at least, different lifestyle" (2009:4). Hence, he calls for attention not

only to the embodied aspect of lifestyle mobility but also to the flows of other types of mobilities that are initiated by embodied mobilities, and that in different ways facilitate or impact the opportunities for corporeal mobility. Thus, this calls for attention to the production (and consumption) aspect of lifestyle mobilities.

Data and methods

This thesis is largely based on a detailed case study of Swedish, retired lifestyle movers in Malta, and as such the theoretical ideas that can be drawn from it must be sensitive to the unique context within which the study is embedded. Lifestyle mobilities are complex phenomena in both production and performance; and these complexities are evident on different geographical scales, in 'large' structures as well as on the individual level. A qualitative approach is therefore adopted here, since it "offers opportunities to study complex phenomena within their context" (Sandberg 2011:38). The methodological focus is on processes and meanings, and the research aims to understand experiences, feelings, perceptions and agency related to the production and performance of lifestyle mobilities. In this chapter, I will outline the methodological design of the study, describe the material on which it is based, and discuss the main considerations and challenges of the research process.

Methodological considerations

The design of methods used in this study was initially rather open and exploratory; the process of designing the methodology has evolved throughout the project. Initial data collection and subsequent analysis were sensitive to discover issues which could be further unfolded; the approach taken in this thesis is thus largely an inductive one. This process can be seen in the progress of the papers comprising the empirical part of the thesis. The first paper is largely descriptive, describing the production side of lifestyle mobilities with a strong focus on the property sector. It focuses on large structures and the organization of the international property sector, as it relates to opportunities for lifestyle mobility. The methods used in the first paper are thus exploratory and entail a combination of observation, questionnaire data and expert interviews to piece together an overview of the sector. The second and third papers combine the study of larger structures and individual agency, as they focus on processes of the performance of lifestyle mobility. The fourth paper focuses on meanings and implications for identity creation, and thus while it remains sensitive to structural frameworks, its major concerns revolve around individual narration. The three latter papers all draw from one set of in-depth interviews, and while Papers II and III adopt thematic analysis of experiences and performance, Paper IV deploys a narrative analysis aiming to understand how the respondents reflect upon and make sense of lifestyle values and identity.

The major part of this thesis draws from a case study of lifestyle mobility in Malta. "The case study is a research strategy which focuses on

understanding the dynamics present within single settings" (Eisenhardt 1999:138), which can involve single or multiple cases and multiple levels of analysis, in which different methods of data collection and analysis can be successfully combined. Case studies are normally explorative; they are particularistic in that a general phenomenon is studied through unique cases, they are descriptive in that they capture the phenomenon in as much detail as possible, and they are inductive in that analysis remains grounded in the data – data 'lead' the analysis (Merriam 1994; Tollefsen Altamirano 2000). Thus, case studies have the potential to generate new insights into theory since evidence from unique cases can contradict theory or allow the researcher to approach problems from a different angle. On the other hand, the closeness to rich data may lead to theory building that is 'blinded' by the specific context of the case and therefore becomes idiosyncratic (Eisenhardt 1999). This was kept in mind during the research process, and care has been taken to link the findings drawn from the case study to current theorizing on lifestyle mobilities.

An assumption that has guided the research is the perspective that structural frameworks facilitating or hindering mobility and individual agency in performing mobility practices are intimately intertwined. Therefore, the analysis seeks to "theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided" (Braun and Clarke 2006:85) in the interviews, and understand individual interpretations of and responses to structures. Thus, the study of structures is imperative in this thesis. Structures can be defined as "internally related objects or practices" (Winchester 2005:5), and are made up of the coexistence of internally related individuals, objects and practices; thus society at large is made up of a wide range of intersecting structures that constantly reinforce and challenge each other. Structures influence the way mobilities are produced and influence performance. In this thesis the study of structures included scrutinizing, for example: how structures are built, reproduced and reified (e.g. sector organization and tax policies); the material and symbolic representations of structures (e.g. lifestyle values, place imaginations, mediation); and the various power structures/power geometries inherent within structural frameworks (e.g. affluence, freedom of mobility/choice, discourses). As hinted above, research also has to be sensitive to structures on different levels: 'large structures' such as policies, infrastructures, law and social structures, and micro-structures such as relations within the household and family.

Delimitations and challenges

One main issue within research on most types of lifestyle mobilities is the general lack of reliable aggregated data (e.g. King et al. 2000), which is why endeavours to quantify the dispersion and flows of lifestyle mobilities have thus far been incomplete. The problem is twofold: firstly, the wide variance in temporal and spatial dimensions of lifestyle mobilities, the ways movers often alter their mobility practices and thereby their legal statuses (O'Reilly 2003), and the lack of definitional consensus imply that comparable data are extremely difficult to derive. When it comes to semi-permanent types of mobility or migration, data are often difficult to discern from the existing information within statistical databases. Secondly, especially when it comes to seasonal mobility and second homes, there is a practical problem of non-registration. This depends on both the efficiency and accuracy of the body that collects and compiles the data, and the motivation of residents themselves to actually register. Unwillingness to register has been suggested to be due to neglect or confusion about legislation, or to residents wanting to avoid paying taxes (King et al. 2000). For example, O'Reilly (2007b) found that only about one in three British movers in Spain registers resettlement. It must therefore be assumed that the existing data are exceedingly underestimated. While this lack of aggregated data delimits the background knowledge and context of lifestyle mobilities it is not considered to be a major problem in this thesis, given the qualitative approach used here.

Developing rapport with and obtaining consent from movers to conduct interviews proved more difficult than expected. The relocation of one's permanent residence to Malta is not only associated with enjoying the climate and other 'soft' elements of the good life, but also involves tax minimization as an important motivator, which is a rather sensitive issue; thus most movers were reluctant to share their experiences with me. Since the study required discussion of this and other sensitive issues (such as family dependence), it was important to ensure the informed consent of the participating respondents. Participating respondents were therefore informed about the research aims and what questions the interviews would focus on before an interview was agreed upon, and they were also offered a chance to review the interview transcripts prior to analysis. In the written papers and in the thesis, all respondents are given pseudonyms. In order to find respondents willing to participate, the snowballing or chain referral sampling method was used, which is described further below.

It is assumed here that knowledge is context-specific, and that interviews are co-created and interpreted intersubjectively (Valentine 1999; Reissman 2008). Qualitative research is constitutive of both the researcher and those

researched, and "social identity is also made and remade through the research process" (Rose 1997:315). Knowledge is thus positioned (Haraway 1991): contextualized by the producers, i.e. the researcher and the researched. It is therefore necessary that the researcher remain reflexive about his or her own role in the process of knowledge creation. In conducting this research, I have found myself to be like as well as unlike my respondents in many ways. As Swedish, female, and with experiences of living abroad, my pre-understanding of some of the situations the movers find themselves in might have facilitated communication, while the fact that I am unmarried, childless and quite a bit younger than the movers I have studied might have problematized it. Further, I have also been exposed to and developed similar imaginaries of places, especially of the 'pleasure peripheries', which means that my interpretation of the respondents' answers is most probably coloured by my own imaginaries of places.

As a researcher, "I have the final power of interpretation" (Gilbert 1994:94), and as the in-depth mover interviews were conducted in Swedish, the act of translation in writing the results further emphasizes this. Care has therefore been taken to stay as close as possible to the raw interview transcripts, and translation has not been conducted until the interview extracts were inserted in the final phase of writing. The quotes are rather freely translated in order to keep the 'feeling' of the words rather than directly translating them word for word (Gustafson 2002). On the other hand, many of the expert interviews with agents within the property sector were conducted in English, which is not my native tongue; thus nuances within the spoken word might have been lost in communication, transcription, analysis and writing.

Description of empirical data

The data were collected mainly during three time periods: first, observational fieldwork was conducted in February 2010 at a major property exhibition held in Stockholm, Sweden. During this field visit agent interviews were also held, and the questionnaire survey was sent out during the months following the field visit. The second round of data collection was carried out in Malta in March 2011 and included more agent interviews, as well as initial interviews with Swedish movers. The last field visit was conducted in November 2011, when most of the mover interviews were carried out, as well as observations during a property viewing trip.

Observational fieldwork

In the initial phase of research, an observational field visit was made to the property exhibition 'Köpa hus utomlands' [Buying property abroad] (in February 2010), aiming to outline the organization of the international property sector as mediated in Sweden and understand the mediator roles of agents. The exhibition is a major promotion and distribution channel for lifestyle-led international property acquisition (see Paper I). The main purposes of the observational field visit were to quantify and classify exhibitors and get a contextual overview of promotion and mediation activities during the exhibition. The observation was complemented with a collection of secondary materials such as leaflets and brochures, and agents' websites were browsed to enrich the detail of promotion and mediation.

Observation also complemented the interview data (Papers I-IV), as most of the interviews were conducted in Malta, at the offices of estate agents and relocation consultants, in the homes of movers, or at their favourite cafés and restaurants. I was invited to participate in social activities with the Swedish Club, and I also participated in a three-day viewing trip arranged by an estate agent, including meetings with consultants, property viewing, and a guided tour to see the 'gems of Malta'. These experiences all contributed substantially to my contextual understanding of Malta, of the process of relocation, and of the extraordinary and everyday experiences of lifestyle mobility.

Agent interviews and questionnaire

In order to describe and understand agent roles in the mediation of property as well as of lifestyle values and place imaginaries, and to gain an understanding of the many ways agents influence the process of lifestyle-led relocation, a questionnaire survey and a set of interviews were conducted, targeting property agents and consultants working with relocation abroad. The questionnaire survey was sent electronically to property agents participating in the 2010 spring exhibition in Stockholm, and agents found through a web search for international property agents. The questionnaire survey was solely targeted at property agents, and explored promotion and mediation activities, offers and customer characteristics (see Paper I). The questionnaire had a relatively low response rate (~28%), however since its purpose was mainly to provide background descriptives, the low rate is not seen as a major problem.

Nineteen semi-structured interviews were then conducted, 15 with property agents and four with private consultants specializing in relocation

abroad. Due to practical reasons, some interviews were conducted via telephone; however, most were conducted face-to-face, either in relation to the property exhibition or on site in Malta. About half of these interviewees operate in Malta, and these interviews were conducted during the first field visit there. These interviews aimed to build a picture of how the property sector is organized, and how agents view the phenomenon of lifestyle mobility. Furthermore, they aimed to understand how property and ancillary agents mediate lifestyle values and promote Malta as a lifestyle destination. The analysis of the agent interviews also identified issues that were taken up in the mover interviews, for example what movers need or want from an agent.

Mover interviews

The major part of the material used in this thesis (Papers II-IV) is drawn from a set of qualitative in-depth interviews with retired, Swedish lifestyle movers in Malta. At the time of the interviews, the respondents had all acquired or were in the process of acquiring property in Malta, and all divided their time routinely between Sweden and Malta or planned to do so. One couple also spent a substantial amount of time each year in a third country. The interviews were conducted between March and November 2011, mostly on site in Malta, although for practical reasons a few were conducted via telephone or Skype. The mover interviews were aimed to produce rich, detailed data on the movers' experiences in performing lifestyle mobility, and were thus designed to be open, while interview guides ensured that central issues were not forgotten. The interviews lasted 30 minutes to about two hours, and when it could be arranged, were followed up at a later session. This meant that a few of the respondents participated in up to four hours of in-depth interviews. During the time of data collection, interviews, transcription and analysis were conducted in interplay, which allowed a progress in research design. The initial interviews produced a range of further questions, which inspired the design of the following interviews and the subsequent papers (III and IV); thus, focus evolved toward first individual agency, and later to dealing with meanings, emotions and identity. Through this process, the set of mover interviews could be analysed from different angles and proved useful in three different studies (Papers II-IV).

In order to study a group in which lifestyle choices are not directly influenced by working hours, the research focuses on retirees. This decision also relates to the fact that retirees constitute the main marketing segment of agents active in the property exhibition, and they are also the ones primarily targeted by the tax policies. A total of 17 individuals participated in the study, and were allowed to choose to give the interviews individually or together as

a couple. Though all were living in a relationship, five persons preferred the individual interview, mostly for practical reasons. Two of the interviewees had not yet entered retirement; however, a retirement plan was prominent in their decision-making strategies. The sampling method was chosen considering the aim to reach diversity (within the group of retirement movers) of respondents in order to give as detailed a picture as possible of the lifestyle mobility context. Even though the respondents are situated in a similar context they do illustrate a variance in mobility practices, backgrounds, drivers, opinions and social relations. A combination of network recruitment and snowballing was used. Network, or participant, recruitment (Hennik et al. 2011) was conducted by advertising the research project through a Swedish social club in Malta and on web forums, which are natural gathering points for movers. Attending social gatherings with the Swedish Club also helped me develop rapport with the study community. There is a limitation inherent in this method however, since not all movers are involved in social activities arranged by the club; thus the snowballing method was a useful complement.

When conducting snowballing, or chain referral sampling, an interviewee is asked to recommend other persons they believe are suitable for participation. This method is useful when studying participants with specific characteristics or rare experiences, or who are 'hidden' within the larger population (Hennik et al. 2011). It could be said that my respondents are 'hidden' since they turned out to be rather reluctant to volunteer for participation. Snowballing therefore proved to be a fruitful sampling method, since I was able to gain their trust by being recommended by earlier interviewees. Snowballing is also dependent on social networks; for example, Gustafson (2002) found that friends recommended each other and discussed the interviews among themselves, which may influence the answers given. Furthermore, recommendation can be directed by respectability; respondents might want to point out persons they deem likely to give a positive account of issues (Gustafson 2002). The lack of good register data also 'hides' the respondents within the population, which is why expatriate clubs are often a common starting point for recruitment. However, recruiting respondents from a limited social space like a club may create a strong bias as it can be argued that a shared narrative about the experience of lifestyle mobility is developed within the group and therefore other narratives may be overlooked. To ameliorate these limitations, many entry points are recommended so that the sampling taps into a diverse range of social networks (Hennik et al. 2011). I therefore also sought elsewhere for respondents, for example by asking property agents to advertise the project to former customers, and in the end the group of respondents included both members and non-members of the Swedish Club.

The values of conducting joint couple interviews have been debated among social scholars. Joint couple interviews are usually conducted within research on family and household, and normally with a gender or power relations focus; for example, dynamics between partners or parents and children. In this study, interviewing couples together was deemed valuable since moving is a joint project as the process of relocation includes common goals, negotiations and compromises; sometimes emotions and aspirations are similar, other times the partners feel differently. Hertz (1995) argued that partners in a marriage/household develop a type of collective identity of being 'a couple', which is strengthened by collective memories or a division in remembering. Joint couple interviews can capitalize on this since they provide a common reflective space that contributes to the production of rich data; by extensions and corroboration, and by disagreements and discussions between the respondents. This interplay between the partners enriches the data, as the researcher can observe not only what they describe but also how they interact (Valentine 1999; Bjørnholt and Farstad 2012).

In the interviews, the discussions between the respondents about their self-identities and their collective identity (as a couple) became more detailed as they explained both to me and to each other how they position themselves (as individuals and as a couple). They could also better elaborate on how they feel the dynamics within the household are structured; for example how tasks are distributed. A potential drawback in a joint interview setting is that the participants might experience less freedom to utter personal opinions that contradict their partner's, or that concern their opinions about their partner. Valentine noted that "households often have an informal 'spokesperson': the member of the household who represents it to the outside world" (1999:68), which can mean that opinions or experiences of the other party are not voiced. It can also result in a lack of control over the interview setting on the part of the interviewer (Bennet and McAvity 1992).

Therefore, the researcher walks a delicate line to manage and probe the interview so that both participants are given the opportunity to speak their mind. Gustafson (2002) noted that couples might conceal disagreements or avoid sensitive issues in the interview setting. However my interviews contain examples of disagreement and a general willingness to discuss sensitive issues (though perhaps not always because of joint interviewing). A potential explanation for this willingness, also discussed in the results and conclusions of Papers III and IV and in the conclusions of this part of the thesis, is that the movers were rather anxious to emphasize the 'righteousness' of their aspirations and motives. As economic motives are sometimes seen as selfish and shallow, movers were keen to explain how

they were primarily steered by other, 'better' motives, while economic benefits rather allowed access to opportunities for the good life, such as early retirement or a larger consumption space. Such idealized renderings of their own behaviour, 'imaginative generalizations' (Levy 1981), are rather common in narratives about migration and mobility, and there is a possibility that couple interviews might break through these generalizations, as the partners discuss and contradict each other's stories (Valentine 1999).

Analysis

The empirical data have been analysed using thematic analysis and thematic narrative analysis. In the four individual papers, there is an analytical progress from primarily descriptive in Paper I to an interpretative focus in Paper IV. For a more detailed description of the methods, see each individual paper.

Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis "involves the searching across a data set [...] to find repeated patterns of meaning" (Braun and Clarke 2006:86), and is therefore a fundamental exercise in most qualitative analysis. Perhaps precisely because it is a basic and relatively straightforward method for qualitative research, it has rarely been acknowledged as a rigorous method in its own right (Boyatzis 1998). A main advantage is its flexibility; thematic analysis can be conducted within different theoretical and epistemological frameworks, and can be used for analysing different types of qualitative data (texts, documents, images, and different types of interview material). At the least, thematic analysis identifies, classifies and describes a data set, but ideally it also interprets and contextualizes the understanding of the themes developed. Being thus flexible and adaptable, thematic analysis is strongly characterized by the theoretical position within which it is situated; thus "a good thematic analysis will make this transparent" (Braun and Clarke 2006:81). In this thesis, thematic analysis has been utilized both 'on its own', in the first three papers, and combined with narrative analysis in Paper IV. Throughout the studies, the analysis has been sensitive to the wider context within which the empirical material has been collected, and themes have been developed in order to capture influences, processes and meanings related to the structural frameworks and the respondents' understandings of them.

In Paper I, the analysis aimed primarily to describe and structure data to develop an understanding of the dispersion, distribution and organization of international property mediation. As the paper aims to scrutinize whether

international property mediation can be understood as part of the production side of lifestyle mobilities, themes were pre-defined with inspiration from an existing model of tourism production (Smith 1998), and based on these themes, mediator activities and roles could be described. Paper II focuses on structure and process; here, descriptives from agent interviews informed the background knowledge and a thematic analysis was deployed to understand how movers made sense of structures, allocated resources and made decisions throughout the property acquisition process. Also here, themes were inspired by previous theory (housing pathways; Clapham 2002, and models of acquisition behaviour; e.g. Kotler 1994), but were derived from within the data; the approach was thus more inductive than in the first paper. Paper III focused on individual agency and drivers of lifestyle mobilities and thus involved a deeper analysis of underlying factors. Thematic analysis was again used, however in this study the analysis went deeper, beyond the explicit level, with themes developed by interpreting movers' underlying motives for mobility, aiming to make visible the ways movers' understandings of structures influenced their individual tailoring of mobility practices.

Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is a deep-reaching form of qualitative analysis aiming to draw out from an interview the "embedded meanings and evaluations of the speaker and their context" (Wiles et al. 2005:90). A basic assumption is the understanding of interview talk as narratives: stories the interviewee tells to make sense of and explain events, experiences, actions or opinions. Telling stories is a way for individuals to construct, organize and share their thoughts and meanings; narrative can thus be explained as an "ontological condition of social life" (Somers 1994:614). These stories may be elaborate, or fragmented, and narrative analysis pays attention to not only the content of a story and the way it is told, but also the context within which it is told (Reissman 1993). By analysing these stories, "we can explore both inner worlds and at the same time capture diverse aspects of social contexts and conditions" (Sandberg 2011:39), and thus, narrative analysis can shed light on how space and social relations are reproduced through the telling of stories. Narrative analysis can provide links to the contextual meanings of places within the accounts given by respondents as they talk about their interpretation of structures, place imaginaries and experiences in social life (Wiles et al. 2005).

In Paper IV thematic narrative analysis is deployed, which "focuses on themes within a story to give narratives a sense of direction and purpose, with emphasis on the 'told', generally without attending to language, form or

interaction" (Sandberg 2011:46). Thematic narrative analysis focuses on repeated themes across cases rather than keeping individual narratives intact (Reissman 2008); thus it is also suitable for seeking understanding of network relations and social interaction (Somers 1994). As Paper IV aims to understand how movers (re)negotiate their identities in relation to place, mobility and belongings, the themes that were developed focused on representations and positionality. Representations involved both how the movers imagine places and how they represent themselves as movers; this naturally also included the representations of others, as this mirrors the way the movers represent themselves (Kraus 2006). Positionality refers to the ways movers place (position) themselves in relation to place imaginaries and representations of other people, thus creating their self-identities in relation to these positions (Rose 1997). A contextual analysis of the respondents' narratives was applied (Winstanely et al. 2002; Wiles et al. 2005), to illustrate the various ways the movers represented places, themselves and other movers, and how this impacted on their lifestyle choices and identity creation.

Setting the scene

In this chapter, the context of the case study of Swedish lifestyle movers in Malta will be outlined. First, Malta and Sweden are situated in relation to structural frameworks which relate to lifestyle mobilities, and second, the Swedish movers in Malta are presented.

Situating Malta

Malta is an island state located in the south-central part of the Mediterranean Sea, about 90 km south of the Italian island of Sicily and 300 km east of the Tunisian coast. The land area of 316 km² comprises three main islands (Malta, Gozo and Comino), of which the two largest host a population of approximately 410,000 (Malta National Statistics Office). This makes Malta one of the most densely populated states in Europe, with slightly over 1,600 persons per km². The major part of the population is concentrated to a Larger Urban Zone (LUZ) developed around the Grand Harbour and the capital city of Valletta, and the largest town is Birkirkara, west of the capital. In recent history, Malta was a British colony and military base, and functioned as a main shipyard for the British Mediterranean fleet. Malta became independent in 1964 and was proclaimed a republic in 1974. Its official and administrative languages are Maltese and English, and its administrative system is heavily influenced by the British model. Apart from limestone quarries Malta has few natural resources, and its economic sector is substantially sustained by ICT and financial services, electronics and manufacturing, and tourism and related sectors.

Tourism accounts for approximately 30% of the country's GDP as Malta is visited by around 1 million tourists each year, most of them British (Malta Tourism Authority). The tourism sector boomed in the 50s and was most heavily developed in the northeast (King et al., 2000); however its image long suffered from a notion of cheap mass tourism with poor facilities (Dodds 2007) and an unregulated 'building frenzy' (Vakili-Zad and Hoekstra 2011). In 1989 a new Tourism Master Plan was launched to rejuvenate the destination, based on sustainability values. The strategy included stricter regulations on building permits, a focus on culture tourism, and attracting 'quality tourists', but its implementation focused mainly on economic sustainability and led to the building of luxury tourism facilities, residential complexes and marinas (Dodds 2007). Malta joined the European Union in 2004and, and the Eurozone in 2008. After this, new markets for tourism and consumption-led immigration opened up and the sector has again grown in importance (Malta Tourism Authority).

Lifestyle values feature heavily in the promotion of Malta. Among the mediated images are the typical Mediterranean climate, dramatic landscape, closeness to amenities, and rich cultural heritage. Its strategic location in the middle of the Mediterranean and easy access by numerous bays has throughout history made Malta a significant hub along the main sea routes, and its culture bears Arabic, Italian and British influences. Today, Malta is promoted as a bustling and modern society where business, shopping and entertainment centres are well developed and accessible. Relocation to Malta has been facilitated not least by the its image as an attractive destination for accessing quality of life, mediated in real estate exhibitions, prime-time television shows and alluring property magazines. Luxury living and the opportunities to access a favourable taxation scheme are emphasized in marketing, and Malta is described by promotion agents as "the best country for retirement" and as a destination which "suits their [the lifestyle movers'] lifestyle and tax profile". The wish to attract the 'right' sort of movers is evident, as the fiscal policy explicitly targets 'High Net Worth Individuals'. This echoes the tourism strategy's focus on quality tourism products and, not least, 'quality tourists'.

Structural frameworks

Malta's policies on tourism and immigration have been coordinated since the 60s (Warnes and Patterson 1998), and there is an outspoken aim to attract affluent individuals such as mobile professionals and wealthy retirees. These financially strong individuals may potentially wheel consumption, not least in real estate, tourism and related sectors. The special tax treatment of foreign settlers was first launched already in 1964, when British immigrants were granted a personal taxation rate of six pennies to the pound (2.5%). In the following years thousands of 'sixpenny settlers' were registered as permanent residents of Malta, resulting in public outcry as the wealthy foreigners were outcompeting the Maltese on the property market, and the scheme was abandoned in 1971 (Warnes and Patterson 1998). In 1986 a new policy was launched, named the Permanent Residence Scheme, treating foreign immigrants to a flat tax rate of 15% on income remitted to Malta. To target high-yield immigrants some requirements were established, such as the acquisition of property, registration of permanent residency, a minimum annual duration of stay, and a fixed minimal amount of tax payment. However, in time these requirements proved inadequate for avoiding abuse of the system, and in December 2010 the scheme was suspended awaiting revision. In September 2011 and October 2012, respectively, new policies (the High Net Worth Residence Scheme and the Malta Retirement Programme) were launched. Both allow a personal tax rate

of 15% on remitted income; however, the criteria for fulfilling requirements have been raised to explicitly target affluent individuals.

The acquisition of property (by renting or purchasing) is an important consideration of the Swedish movers in Malta; both because the holding of property is required in order to access the tax schemes, and because having a place of one's own is a major element of the good life. Even though the administrative system in Malta is essentially built on the British model, the real estate sector highly resembles the Latin notary system (Jingryd 2008) and differs from the Scandinavian one with which most movers are familiar. The stock of available property is large, but as agents do not hold exclusive rights to showing, the market is highly competitive. The rules surrounding taxation policies, property acquisition, and exit from Sweden and immigration to Malta are rather rigorous, so most movers prefer to enlist the help of professional consultants and mediators to get access. The social aspect of mediation is evidenced in the studies, with many respondents describing becoming friends with their property agents, landlords and developers.

Situating Sweden

In area, Sweden is among the largest countries in Europe, while with its population of about 9.5 million it is among Europe's most sparsely populated countries, with only 23 persons per km² (Eurostat). Nature and outdoor recreation play a significant role in Swedish culture, pronounced in the legally secured Right of Public Access to the countryside. Nearly 50% of Swedish households have access to a second home (Jansson and Müller 2003), often located in rural amenity landscapes and usually referred to as the 'summer cottage', the 'sport cottage' or the 'countryside place'. Second homes in Sweden generally symbolize traditional countryside life, childhood memories, outdoor recreation, a break from the everyday, family reunion and admiration of the natural landscape (Pihl Atmer 1987; Hall and Müller 2004). However, following the increase in outbound tourism, especially charter tourism to the Mediterranean in the 50s and 60s, the ownership of a holiday home abroad has become an alternative (even though its numbers can in no way compare) to the countryside cottage. Motivations for utilizing a holiday home abroad quite contrast those for utilizing a domestic second home, and include seeking a warmer climate and new lifestyle (Gustafson 2001) and extending the tourism experience (Rodríguez 2001), but they also resemble each other in terms of relaxation and recreation, a change of environment and accessing amenity landscapes – even though the landscape and environment differ substantially from the Swedish. Following the social and economic homogenization of EU member nations and the

acknowledgement of the potential benefits of attracting foreign lifestyle migrants, structural frameworks have largely altered the opportunities for more long-term use of the holiday home abroad. Since the 90s an increasing number of Swedes have begun to alter their formal residency statuses, and their international mobility patterns can increasingly be described as multiple dwelling rather than second home tourism.

Structural frameworks

Sweden adopts a Universalist, 'social democratic' approach to the welfare state, with the public sector playing a paramount role in the redistribution of resources, and offers equal access to health care, elderly care and social security (Esping-Andersen 2006). Some benefits demand permanent residency in Sweden, while for others citizenship is sufficient. Since 1995, a double taxation agreement is in force between Sweden and Malta (Riksskatteverket). This agreement states that individuals who move their permanent address out of Sweden to Malta, and are considered subjects of personal taxation there, will cease to be subjected to taxation in Sweden. Being subjected to taxation, according to the agreement, is based on domicile, residence, base of business or similar conditions; however, it allows for income to be remitted between the states. To avoid taxation in Sweden, thus, the mover has to fulfil a set of criteria prohibiting 'significant association' with Sweden. Significant association primarily includes the ownership of a permanent residence, remaining underaged children, significant participation in economic activities (such as running a business), political and board assignments, and a stay in Sweden of more than 183 days during the course of one year. These regulations impact significantly on the mobility practices of movers, as they strongly encourage resettlement (migration in the formal sense), and direct the length of stay. During the first five years the burden of proof lies with the mover, in many cases resulting in rather meticulous diary keeping to record mobility trajectories (Paper III).

The Swedes in Malta

Two major groups of Swedes reside in Malta. The first consists of young, mobile professionals (typically in their 20s and 30s, often moving with family) usually employed in the ICT, betting, or financial service sectors. The second group consists of retired or close-to-retirement individuals, usually moving in couples. This latter group is the one featured in the interviews conducted for this study, and is the one referred to throughout. A total of 780 Swedes (all ages) are recorded as out-migrants from Sweden to Malta between 2000 and 2011 (Statistics Sweden), however due to the previously noted problem of accounting for lifestyle movers it is probable that the actual

number of Swedes in Malta is significantly higher. Most Swedish movers locate centrally or to the outskirts of the LUZ, where there is convenient distance to amenities like shopping, business centres, restaurants and entertainment, and where new developments at sea-front locations are common. About half of the interviewed movers had chosen to purchase a property, while the others preferred long-term renting. There are no obvious 'Swedish quarters', however given the small size of the country and the popular areas, the movers generally live relatively close to each other.

Common reasons given for the choice of Malta are the warm winters, the widespread use of the English language, the tax policies, the relatively short travel distance and the closeness to amenities. All movers return routinely to Sweden for approximately three to six months every year, commonly during the summer months when they spend time in their Swedish second home, often together with their extended families. Many movers also spend a substantial time travelling, exploring 'new' destinations more easily accessed from Malta than from Sweden. Describing their lifestyle, all respondents emphasized the increased opportunities to be active: to take walks in the pleasant climate, to explore the islands and to participate in both organized and unorganized activities with other movers. The Swedish Club is an important meeting point in this respect, organizing a multitude of activities such as dinners and pub evenings, hikes, yoga classes, book circles and painting courses. A few movers also engage in work related to their lifestyle values, for example running a small B&B (primarily hosting Swedish guests) or participating in charity events.

Even though the movers primarily related to life in Malta as they talked about their lifestyle choices, Sweden also emerges as a place which is still significant since all movers routinely return there every year to sustain their relationships and the attachments to place they have formed there. Social relationships are sustained throughout the year not only by returning, but also by welcoming relatives and friends as guests in Malta. Usually, the movers spend the winter months in Malta and return for the summer to their second homes in Sweden, enjoying family reunion and the familiarity of the environment. They describe this lifestyle as the 'best of both worlds', and the ability to change one's environment is expressed as an integral part of the good life.

Paper summaries

Paper I: Selling a Place in the Sun – International Property Mediation as Production of Lifestyle Mobility

The first paper focuses on the production aspect, exploring how the international property market relates to lifestyle mobilities. Property mediation is understood as an important aspect of the production system of long-term lifestyle mobility, as the holding of property is often a prerequisite for creating formal place attachment, which ensures access to certain entitlements. The dwelling is also often an integral part of the quality of life aspiration of the move, allowing for the development of a sense of belonging and claim to place. While property markets have been noted as an important aspect of the decision to relocate (e.g. Opacic 2009; Paris 2010), few studies have explicitly focused on the property sector in relation to international lifestyle-led mobility (e.g. Hoggart and Buller 1994; 1995; Müller 1999).

This paper is based on data collected from an observational field visit at a major property exhibition specialized in international property mediation, combined with a questionnaire survey and interviews with property agents. The objectives are to: a) describe the organization of the international property sector, b) understand the mediating roles of property agents, and c) position property mediation as production of lifestyle mobility.

Property agents are understood to play a crucial role as intermediaries in the process of relocation abroad, influencing the purchaser's decisions by combining instrumental, interactionary, communicative and social functions of mediation. Because of their superior expertise on property transaction procedures and regulations, area characteristics and contact networks, agents may influence buyers' decisions; however, this also depends on their skills in interpreting client expectations and experiences, and the clients' ability to manage the process themselves. Furthermore, many property agents act as 'lifestyle brokers', promoting the acquisition of a new lifestyle rather than just the purchase of a property, and present and promote the destination in a way similar to the performance of tourist guides, for example emphasizing opportunities for leisure activities and experiences.

In the production process of lifestyle mobility, property mediation can be understood as an intermediate output (Smith 1998), including elements such as showing property, defining search spaces, matchmaking, authorizing contracts, accessing a network of ancillary service agents, and mediating lifestyle values. As the intermediate output functions as the interface between buyers and the structural frameworks at the destination, property

mediation is positioned as an integral part of the production of lifestyle mobility.

Paper II: Buying a Place Abroad – Processes of Recreational Property Acquisition

The second paper also explores how property acquisition relates to lifestyle mobility, and focuses on the demand side as it examines the movers' behaviour during the acquisition process. The acquisition process is complex, influenced by structural frameworks as well as the individual aspirations and drivers of the buyer, so the study has to be sensitive to both structures and agency (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones 2000; Benson 2012). Furthermore, property acquisition is a risky venture as it involves high-value assets and a degree of insecurity as property markets are volatile and structural frameworks are dynamic. It is impossible for buyers to form perfect knowledge about available options, and there is therefore a need to allocate adequate resources, experience and knowledge in order to make informed choices. Property acquisition behaviour has previously been conceptualized in various models of consumer behaviour (e.g. Kotler 1994); however, the multiple drivers and complexity of lifestyle- and leisure-led acquisitions demand contextual awareness. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to conceptualize the property acquisition process in the context of international lifestyle mobility.

The study deploys thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with Swedes in Malta, to explore the following aspects of international property acquisition: a) What are the contextual frameworks faced by Swedish lifestyle movers in Malta? b) How are the movers influenced by mediators and contextual factors in the acquisition process? and c) How can the process of international recreational property acquisition be conceptualized in this context?

Acquisition is found to be influenced by both internal drivers and motives, and external factors that are highly contextualized. This study explains the importance of the structural frameworks and influence of property mediators on decision-making, and conceptualizes the process of international recreational property acquisition in an extended model comprising the stages of 1) needs recognition, 2) research and evaluation, and 3) decision-making and post-acquisition behaviour. Within these stages are substages that help the movers interpret structures and arrange a strategy, such as product specification, contextual orientation, and relationship building with agents and social mediators. The findings illustrate the movers' awareness of a strategy to make informed choices, and

explain some of the ways they act in order to increase their contextual understanding of frameworks and increase their space of choice.

Paper III: Strategic Lifestyle Management in Later Life – Swedish Lifestyle Movers in Malta Seeking the 'Best of Both Worlds'

Paper III explores how the idea of the good life is articulated among the Swedish movers in Malta, and how this good life is actively 'tailored' by individual agency. With increasing possibilities to perform mobility, the good life can be accessed across global space (Ackers and Dwyer 2004) and many states aim to attract wealthy foreigners by promoting themselves as attractive lifestyle destinations. This pinpoints the important role of the state in shaping opportunities that influence individuals' mobility practices (Oliver 2010). However, while moving away to find new opportunities and a new better life, movers also perceive that there are still significant elements of the good life in their former place of residence. Many therefore seek to enjoy 'the best of both worlds', and perform multiple dwelling: routinized mobility between different areas that offer different opportunities across international borders.

Through a thematic analysis of in-depth interviews, the experiences of lifestyle management through mobility are explored among retired Swedes in Malta. The research questions that have guided this study are: a) What does the good life comprise? b) How are structural frameworks surrounding opportunities for lifestyle management perceived by movers? and c) In what ways do movers actively tailor their mobility practices to achieve the good life?

The good life is a fragmented concept, made up of different elements related to aspects of place, self and social relationships, and as individuals move between and make attachments in places to access these elements, they actively tailor their lifestyles. This endeavour is conceptualized as tailoring a lifestyle package, including formal and informal place fixities, such as property ownership and membership in clubs; and routinized and timed mobility practices. In tailoring their individual packages, the movers have to understand and manoeuvre complex structural frameworks which both facilitate and direct their practices, and both optimizing and adaptive strategies are noted. Tailoring lifestyle through mobility is also wrapped in ambiguity as movers have to balance contradictory elements, for example the need for family intimacy with the urge for flexibility and freedom, and they are torn between trying to make strategic choices and adhering to emotions.

Paper IV: Stories of Lifestyle Mobility – Place, Identity and the Search for the 'Good Life'

The focus of this paper is to analyse the meanings of lifestyle mobility for retired Swedish lifestyle movers in Malta, with a focus on how identities are constructed and negotiated through their mobility practices. It has been argued that in contemporary societies an active choice of lifestyle may be not only possible but even demanded (Giddens 1991), as an 'individualization' of society (Elliott and Lemert 2006) demands that individuals reflect upon and choose the 'right' way to live in order to create and uphold social status. Lifestyle is demonstrated through activities, appearance and social relationships, and is also articulated through imaginaries of the places where individuals choose to live or visit. Place imaginaries are socially and collectively developed, through narratives expressed by locals, visitors and migrants, and at popular lifestyle mobility destinations they are often constructed and mediated by agents who wish to attract certain groups of newcomers (e.g. Laws 1997; Torkington 2013). Imaginaries of places also relate to the ways individuals create social and spatial belongings. It is argued here that through the performance of lifestyle mobility, individuals represent and re-negotiate their self-identities, as well as the ways they make and sustain social ties in place(s).

Drawing from in-depth interviews, this paper explores the movers' experiences of mobility, and how they actively give meaning to their mobility practices and place attachments. Telling stories is a way for people to construct and express meanings, and make sense of their experiences of being in the world (Mishler 1986). Through thematic narrative analysis, the movers' stories about moving routinely between Sweden and Malta illustrate how they position their own identities in relation to their imaginaries of these places, and in relation to the belongings they create and re-create through their mobility.

It is found that movers actively reflect upon their lifestyle choices, which are significantly influenced by the social contexts within which they act. In their mobility decisions, movers have to consider multiple social ties; both in Sweden and in the context within which they settle abroad. They relate to and position themselves variously within or opposite to norms in these contexts, and by doing this, create and draw from imaginaries about the meanings of places, and of social relations in place. Thus, the movers create and re-create their self-identities in relation to their (multiple) place attachments and social belongings, and through their mobility practices.

Concluding discussion

This thesis provides an example of how long-term lifestyle mobilities are shaped by complex and interlinked structures, and how movers respond to these structures in order to arrange their mobility practices. Longer-term lifestyle mobilities have previously been explained as induced by tourism flows, especially in Spain (Rodríguez et al. 1998; Casado-Diaz 2006); and imaginaries of the 'authentic life', especially in France (Hoggart and Buller 1994; Benson 2011). Lower costs of living have also been proposed as a motivator (King et al. 2000) commonly related to the mobility trajectories of middle-class movers (O'Reilly 2007a; Benson 2011). A motive for destination choice that features strongly in this thesis is tax minimization. Among Swedish retirees, this is especially interesting given the relatively high tax on pensions the movers are subject to in their home country, and this opportunity has created a whole new market segment focusing on lowering retirement taxes through migration.

However, as shown in the papers presented here, the mobility practices of lifestyle movers are shaped by multiple drivers, and their aspirations of living the good life are built on both 'hard' (economic) motives and 'softer' ones related to comfort, self-fulfilment and belonging. This means that if elements of the good life are dispersed in space, movers may arrange mobility practices to take them routinely between two or more significant places. The motivations, drivers and aspirations of the movers are, in turn, nurtured, influenced and challenged by structural frameworks that are interlinked, multi-scalar and dynamic. Within this complex reality, movers make a range of choices to arrange the best possible way to tailor access to what they consider quality of life.

The desired mover

Lifestyle mobilities in general generate flows that are desired by receiving destinations, as they potentially bring financially strong individuals with the intention to consume. Tourism has long been thought to bring economic revenue to host societies, and is often a part of national planning policy. The potential economic revenue that can be drawn out from longer-term lifestyle movers has now been acknowledged, and indeed, some nations have designed policy explicitly targeting desired groups of movers and seeking to fix movers in place. In Malta, the personal taxation schemes – the High Net Worth Individuals Scheme and the Malta Retirement Programme – are one such example of this. The schemes in effect potentially increase both export consumption (cf. tourism as export sector; Britton 1991) and income tax base, as they encourage the registration of permanent residency (implying

longer stay and increased 'loyalty') among lifestyle movers. Policy schemes are promoted as a competitive advantage, and in some instances have induced states to act in a business-like manner promoting the destination. For the lifestyle mover, the issuing of special policy means that opportunities for performing mobility become good. The advantageous schemes and structural frameworks will largely facilitate their movement, and the schemes also create business incentives for a range of professional actors (primarily estate agents and consultants) who will cater for the specific needs of movers.

Movers will also be exposed to a huge amount of promotion as destinations compete over their interest. Laws (1997) and Torkington (2013) have shown how place-identities can be consciously shaped by agents within the production system of lifestyle mobilities in order to represent a destination which is attractive to foreign guests and settlers. Sometimes the movers' imaginaries about place are informed by their repeated tourist trips there; however, in the case of the Swedes in Malta the interviewed movers had seldom visited the destination before considering moving there (Paper II and III). Their imaginaries about place were rather related to the mediated image presented at the property exhibition, in property catalogues, and through the marketing efforts of property agents (Papers I and II), and thus they were strongly related to an idea of the leisured and accessible 'pleasure periphery' (Turner and Ash 1975; Pearce 1987, see also Paper IV), less touristically exploited than many other Mediterranean destinations yet well organized to cater for their needs as newcomers. This may lead to skewed or romanticized imaginaries of places. Researchers have also expressed concern that the issuing of special entitlements to foreign migrants may lead to 'citizenship trading' (even though here it rather concerns residency trading), arguing that one would move constantly to places offering the best opportunities for the time being (Ip et al. 1997; Ong 1998; Coldron and Ackers 2009) – this would imply less loyalty or fixity in place, and only create artificial place attachments. However, the mover narratives presented here suggest that place and place attachments still matter, as movers engage actively in 'making belonging' and developing relationships in place (Papers III and IV).

Producing lifestyle mobilities

The production side of lifestyle mobilities comprises structural frameworks and mediating activities. Structural frameworks refer to all those infrastructures, procedures, policies and schemes that movers must manoeuvre in order to perform mobility. Infrastructures include, for example, transport networks, communications technologies, information

channels and other structures within the built or virtual environment. These infrastructures can be manoeuvred through a range of procedures, often controlled by authoritative agents (for example customs inspectors or notaries). Policies and schemes are put in place to control, steer, hinder or facilitate mobility in various ways, and will increase the freedom of movement for some while decreasing it for others.

The individual papers have exemplified some of these structures and their linkages on different scales. Globally, lifestyle ideals and images of places are mediated through television shows, lifestyle and travel magazines, and in public discourse, commercials and news media. Large structures like capitalistic globalization, transport infrastructures, economic systems and supranational institutionalizations shape the frameworks within which mobilities are played out on smaller scales. On a national level, structures relate to issues of formal place attachments, policy schemes promoting mobility, controlling structures restricting mobility and choice, and ideals of cosmopolitanism or nationalism, family and belonging. Locally, movers get involved in the property market, are brokered by agent networks, seek the support of social networks, and deal with rules set by local councils. Studying the production aspect of lifestyle mobilities thus underlines the significance of the concept of interrelated space (Massey 2005), as it emphasizes how structures interact on multiple scales and are interlinked geographically. In order to move, an individual has to utilize a combination of these structures, and usually, optimization is strived for. This means that the movers need to allocate resources such as capital, expertise and skills that will increase their knowledge of options and assist them in making optimal choices. Border-crossing mobilities may be problematic, especially regarding migratory moves; indeed, a great deal of research on international migration addresses 'problem issues' like illegal immigration, segregation and exclusion (e.g. Boyle et al. 1998), and this is also reflected in a great deal of national policy aiming to limit or control incoming flows (of people, goods, and sometimes even information). This control is achieved, for example, by the issuing of visas, tariff restrictions and customs checks.

As both tourism and long-term forms of lifestyle mobility are motivated by the wish to enjoy new environments and experience quality of life, and involve travel, the production systems of tourism are largely similar to those of lifestyle migrations. In Paper I, the mediation activities of tourist guides are compared to the activities of property agents. It is concluded that many property agents surpass the common activities performed by estate agents, and rather act as 'lifestyle brokers', supporting the mover in getting to grips with different everyday issues. With their superior expertise, agents can define search spaces, suggest strategy, direct attention and provide a selected

distribution network of resources. Agents also perform guiding activities to present and promote the destination, often emphasizing opportunities for leisure activities and 'touristic' experiences. In this way, lifestyle is thus mediated as a commodity. Building trust relationships with customers is also a common marketing strategy among many agents, and many movers pointed out that this had been important for them to be able to tailor their desired lifestyle (Paper II). Thus, mediators may strongly influence decisions and strategies, acting as facilitators or gatekeepers, and the imaginaries of place the movers develop can be strongly influenced by the activities of mediators. Movers are sometimes also inspired by friends who have already moved away, and contact agents on site recommended by their friends. In this way, the earlier movers may function as bridgeheads (Olofsson 2012), helping new movers to find paths through structures and integrate into the lifestyle mobility context. Social bridgeheads may be interpreted as more trustworthy by movers, as they have similar backgrounds and their advice is not steered by profit goals. Sometimes, property agents make use of this trust as they invite earlier movers to attend seminars and participate in viewing trips to show potential new movers examples of 'successful movers'.

The power of structures to influence decisions is well known among institutions and professional agents seeking to make the most of mobility flows. However, the explicit targeting of the elderly and the affluent is a delicate balancing act. Lifestyle mobilities not only create positive outcomes for host societies, but may also produce conflict and processes of contention (Janoschka and Haas 2013). One example of this is the discussion of the 'care burden' upon the host society following a concentration of retirement migrants in need of medical assistance (Blakemore 1999), which was identified as one reason why the Permanent Residence Scheme was suspended and revised. An overt focus on tax advantages in marketing risks creating a skewed image that movers do not want to relate to, and many respondents indeed commented that there is an exaggerated focus on taxes in the marketing of Malta. The introduction of high entry qualifications to target wealthy individuals may also be a risky venture in the competition with other destinations. In a follow-up interview in May 2013, tax consultants in Sweden reported decreased interest in Malta after the criteria for accessing tax status were raised following a period of suspension. This is a good example of how structures can alter a place's image and of the role structures and images of places play in the arrangement of mobility practices (Paper IV). The suspension of residence permits for several months in 2011 and the subsequent raising of the criteria might have resulted in negative images in two aspects: first, an insecurity regarding the stability of regulations means that movers' conditions for decision-making become uncertain (Paper II); second, a higher level of criteria and explicit targeting

of 'High Net Worth Individuals' create an image of Malta as an elite destination (Paper IV). Movers will respond differently to these changes in structure and place image, depending on their aspirations. For some this image may fit well with their lifestyle values, while for others it can act as a deterrent.

Performing lifestyle mobilities

The performance aspect aims to understand the ways lifestyle mobilities are experienced and embodied, how decision-making is played out in relation to structural frameworks and social context, and how movers negotiate a sense of self through these experiences. Performance departs from the drivers and aspirations motivating mobility, which the movers described as the good life. Paper III outlines the movers' ideas of the good life, comprised of different elements that can be categorized into the three themes of place, self, and social aspects. The category comprising elements of place refers to those aspects of the good life that are related to the environment: for example, enjoying sunshine, being active, relaxing and feeling safe. The second category revolves around self-centred experiences, self-fulfilment and health, while the category of social aspects relates to family intimacy and friendship, recognition, sharing and status. These elements are individually combined in the idea of the good life, and as the opportunities to access them might be found in different places, movers may use mobility as a resource for achieving the good life. The good life, thus, can be individually 'tailored'.

A main consideration among the movers participating in the interviews is the acquisition of property in Malta. The holding of property is a requirement for accessing the taxation scheme (Papers II and III), but it also has an emotional value as it allows the development of a feeling of belonging in place in Malta; a feeling that one is more than a visitor (Paper IV). Paper II suggests a three-stage model of property acquisition describing how movers manoeuvre structures related to purchasing a property in Malta: needs recognition, research and evaluation, and decision-making and post-acquisition behaviour. The model emphasizes the interrelations between contextual structures and individual agency, and focuses on the strategies movers use to orient themselves within the structural framework and make informed choices. It also notes the influence professional mediators and social context have on decision-making. Even though frameworks largely facilitate lifestyle mobility they are complex and volatile, and even though movers are generally described as well-educated and experienced due to prior travels and living abroad, most want or need the assistance of expert advisors, for example estate agents or tax consultants.

In Paper III the idea of tailoring an individual lifestyle package is suggested, borrowing a term from the tourism sector. The lifestyle package pictures how people organize their life context in order to access elements they associate with the good life. Access to elements is secured through formal and informal place attachments/fixities, such as a permanent residency permit and integration into social networks, and the movers access elements of the good life in different places through mobility. The mobility practices arranged by the Swedish movers in Malta are routinized and seasonal, and are to a significant extent directed by external structures (Paper III). For example, the requirement of a minimum stay in Malta and a maximum stay in Sweden due to tax policies directs both duration and frequency of movement. The ways the lifestyle package is tailored are highly individualized, and depend on motives and drivers, personal preferences, prior experience of mobility, and the imaginaries of place(s) informing the movers' pre-understandings. Therefore, the multitude of options and possible paths through them will be interpreted very differently (Paper III).

In relation to the complex structural frameworks and the influence of mediators, movers seek to negotiate their space of choice in mainly three ways: manoeuvring, adapting to, or seeking to manipulate structures. Examples of manoeuvring structures are seeking to optimize travels for example due to seasons, tailoring fiscal and residency entitlements to one's personal conditions, and choosing property and tax agents that fit the mover's wishes. Adapting to structures involves, for example, selling off the primary dwelling in Sweden, or keeping a diary with boarding passes and other markers of duration of stay. An example of manipulating structures to one's advantage can be, for example, selling off the Swedish property to relatives to keep it within the family. Most movers described optimizing strategies to tailor the good life, aided by extensive research and seeking both professional advice and the support of social networks, both local and expatriate. The Swedish Club in Malta was noted as an important network, where prospective movers can ask for advice through the club's web forum, and where those who have already moved can meet at social gatherings, participate in organized and unorganized activities, and share experiences and news.

Most movers expressed a strategic approach to tailoring their new lifestyle; they had a clear goal of what they wanted to achieve, and could describe how they meant to proceed in order to achieve this. A retirement plan (Dwyer 2000) was present in most stories, usually regarding fiscal planning to secure a good life in the future as well, and spending time in a warm climate to ameliorate health issues. Formally moving to Malta and adhering to the regulations of the tax schemes are a means to achieve this,

and maintaining moorings in Sweden can also be partly explained as strategic; to secure paths for a possible return as the age of frailty and dependence draws near (Oliver 2010). Of course, there is also an emotional element in their approaches to lifestyle management, which sometimes trumped strategic approaches; for example, when movers described 'falling in love' with a certain property or area. This does not necessarily make decision-making less informed, and movers emphasized the importance of 'feeling right' about decisions.

The way mediated images of places are matched to movers' self-identities and lifestyle values raises the point of a relational awareness (Massey 2005; Somers 1994); movers constantly take in and interpret structures and discourses about places and about the practices of mobility. By doing this they are also aware of their own positions within this context. Paper III discusses the ways movers relate to the significance of their affluent positions. What they aspire to achieve is what they define as the good life, comprised of different elements. The descriptions of the good life can, in the context of lifestyle mobility, often be boiled down to freedom, individualism and control over one's own lifestyle. To achieve this, certain resources, opportunities and methods are allocated and utilized. Economic opportunities, for example, are a facilitating factor or a means to achieve – but are not in themselves an element of – the good life. Relational awareness also involves the ways movers position themselves in relation to the lifestyle mobility context, and to the collective identity of this group. Identification processes are social processes, and as shown in Paper IV, belonging within the lifestyle mobility context is often an integral part of the good life. However, as individualism can be a strong feature of lifestyle mobility aspirations, movers are at the same time keen to claim their individual agency and freedom of choice. By re-positioning the self away from norms within the lifestyle mobility context – as the Swedes in Malta do when they talk about the 'inauthentic' lifestyle in places like Spain, or about movers in Malta who have only come for the taxes – they evaluate and represent the lifestyle values they believe are 'right', and position themselves as capable and free to make these 'right' choices.

Belonging and balance

Belonging, as something that is connected to place and to relationships, and something that must be attained (Heidegger 1971), is closely connected to the notion of continuity; belonging is something that develops over time, and that most people (at least to an extent) strive to sustain through time. In relation to mobility and multiple place attachments, this can be problematic. Is it possible to belong, and sustain this belonging, to more than one place at

the same time? How does belonging stretch through space? In Paper IV, the movers described belonging as something that needs engagement in order to develop. This engagement can be related to the home, and movers described various home-making practices such as participating in finalizing the dwelling, filling it with personal items (often brought from their old home in Sweden) and designing it according to personal preferences. Developing belonging in place is also related to developing a local knowledge of the destination; for example finding a favourite café, making familiar paths, and tying places to memories of events.

Belonging is also related to a social recognition and making social belonging; accumulating social capital is also something that needs engagement. Paper IV found that movers seek both bridging and bonding forms of social capital (Putnam 2000; Casado-Diaz 2009); while bridging social capital contributes to local knowledge and belonging in place, bonding social capital is more strongly related to a sense of identity. The movers expressed a need to position themselves within a social context; as they performed this mobility as part of creating a new lifestyle, they needed to re-negotiate their identities in relation to it. Hence, new social belongings must be created in place of old ones the movers had left. When engaging in social activities with other movers with similar backgrounds, they could position themselves within the lifestyle mobility context and hence re-position an identity as lifestyle movers.

Yet, moving away from social belongings in Sweden is wrapped with ambiguity, and the movers were reluctant to cut social ties in Sweden. This can be a major reason to pursue multiple dwelling rather than full migration; as movers seek to have the 'best of both worlds', balancing their urge for mobility with their needs to maintain moorings. As discussed above, movers re-position their identities into the lifestyle mobility context to 'make belonging' in the new destination; and it is implied that they also must re-position their identities and belongings in Sweden as the decision to relocate breaks both their belongings in place there and socially constructed norms about belonging and identity in the Swedish social context. Even though many respondents described having been supported by family and friends, they also experienced friction and criticism. This is one example of freedom of choice being constrained as movers balance their social belongings in Sweden by feelings of participation and recognition with feelings of obligation and refraining from norms.

The ambiguity expressed by the movers can be described as part of the process of identity creation inherent in the search for the good life, as movers negotiate and re-negotiate their identities in relation to places, belonging

and mobility. Performing lifestyle mobility is an embodied aspect of an ongoing life project. Moving becomes a new challenge, a project whereby movers seek novelty; new environments and new situations where their self-representations can be understood in a new light. The identity construction process is related to the lived experiences of moving between significant places, and thus, the imaginings of these places become an important part of identity. As a lifestyle project that in many ways breaks norms and casts aside belongings and place attachments, the notion of 'success' features strongly in the stories told by the movers (see also Gustafson 2001; O'Reilly 2007a; Benson 2012). Much has been gambled in this search for the good life and it is unlikely that movers would tell stories of failure, especially in the context of individualism. The need for success is expressed in the ways the movers defend their choices as the 'right' ones, reasserted by telling stories about others' unsuccessful decisions and lifestyle values resulting in disappointing lifestyles. By this, movers describe themselves with a form of social distinction or symbolic capital (Benson 2012) that emphasizes their success.

Emotions indeed play an important role in the tailoring of the good life, both when it comes to mobility (evoking feelings of freedom, control over one's life, and novelty) and in relation to place attachments and belongings (associated with feelings of continuity, community and memories). The narratives presented in Paper IV illustrate how the movers seek to balance mobility and moorings as they move between places and develop multiple place attachments. Within the social context of lifestyle mobility, the search for a 'better way of life' and an urge to 'move on' are strongly embedded (Gustafson 2001; Benson and O'Reilly 2009a; Cohen et al. 2013); however, the narratives also emphasize the importance of 'pause' and belonging. On the one hand, the movers seek to integrate into the context of their new home place by acquiring a dwelling and engaging in the everyday life in Malta, and form new relationships with neighbours and other movers. On the other hand, they maintain moorings in Sweden in the form of a second home and sustained relationships, and reconnect with their 'old lives' through routinized return and visits by family members. The new mobile lifestyle thus includes not only elements of novelty but also those of continuity.

Sammanfattning (summary in Swedish)

Det har ofta argumenterats att dagens samhällen är formade av globalisering; de snabba kommunikationer som sammanlänkar världens samhällen, ekonomier, marknader och institutioner (e.g. Robertson 1992; Savage et al. 2005). Mänsklig rörlighet har på många sätt förenklats, inte minst vad gäller internationella förflyttningar, och under de senaste decennierna har forskare börjat intressera sig för rörlighetsmönster som inte är primärt motiverade av arbetsmarknader eller politiska faktorer, men som snarare är drivna av konsumtion och livsstilsvärderingar. Denna avhandling behandlar ämnet *livsstilsmobilitet* (McIntyre 2009; Cohen et al. 2013), vilket här definieras som de valfria rörelsemönster som individer företar sig; som är av temporär eller mer permanent karaktär; med eller utan betydelsefulla 'hemmabaser'; som i första hand drivs av ambitioner att öka livskvalitet; och som i första hand kan relateras till individens livsstilsvärderingar. Faktorer för livskvaltet inkluderar vanligtvis klimat, natur, bekvämlighet, äventyr, gemenskap, autencitet, självförverkligande, hälsa och konsumption (se t.ex. Benson and O'Reilly 2009a). I sökandet efter upplevelser, variation, rekreation eller bekvämlighet reser, cirkulerar och migrerar individer mellan olika platser, och genom detta utmanas gränserna mellan de binära begreppen 'hemma' och 'borta', 'vardag' och 'extraordinärt' (O'Reilly 2003).

Ett grundläggande element av livsstilsmobilitet är frihet; valfrihet och rörelsefrihet. Detta är i mångt och mycket begränsat till ett fåtal priviligerade individer, och en gemensam nämnare bland de som utför livsstilsmobilitet är deras *relativa* välstånd (Benson and O´Reilly 2009b) jämfört med majoriteten av världens befolkning. Detta inkluderar olika typer av kapital, inte enbart finansiellt, men även socialt, kulturellt och symboliskt kapital som skapar möjligheter att, till exempel, korsa gränser och inkluderas i olika sociala sammanhang. Men frihet är alltid kontextualiserat och inbäddat i strukturella rambetingelser, och det kan ofta vara frustrerande och svårt att förstå strukturer, influenser och inte minst de egna ambitionerna; att skräddarsy det goda livet är komplext. Influenser från rådgivare kan spela en viktig roll, och eftersom både rationalitet och känslor är involverade är beslutsfattande ofta svårt. I många länder ses livsstilsmobilitet som en lukrativ sektor, och strukturer är ibland designade för att styra och attrahera flöden av välbeställda.

Avhandlingen undersöker hur livsstilsmotiverade mobiliteter produceras och utförs, genom att studera rörelsemönster hos svenskar som flyttar säsongsbaserat mellan Sverige och Malta. Alla individer som ingår i studien är i pensionsåldern, och har flyttat formellt från Sverige till Malta där de

spenderar ungefär sex till nio månader per år. Dock reser alla rutinmässigt tillbaka till Sverige varje år under relativt långa tidsrymder, och för många finns inga tydliga preferenser angående vilken plats som symboliserar ett primärt hemmavarande. De sätt på vilka respondenterna beskriver sina rörelsebeslut antyder att deras beslutsfattande är påverkat av många olika faktorer. Tidigare studier har noterat att rörelsebeslut behöver undersökas med utgångspunkt i både de strukturella ramverk som påverkar mobilitet, samt det individuella agerandet (e.g. Gallent and Twedwr-Jones 2000; Benson 2012). En utgångspunkt i avhandlingen är därför de två aspekterna av produktion och utförande (production and performance) av livsstilsmobilitet.

Avhandlingen fokuserar på hur individerna uppfattar, förhåller sig till, och manövrerar de olika strukturella ramverk som både underlättar, och kontrollerar de val individerna kan göra kring sin egen mobilitet och platsanknytning. Ett annat fokus behandlar de idéer, känslor och betydelser om platser, identitet och livsstil som individerna formulerar och omformulerar genom de rörelsemönster de utför, och genom de anknytningar de skapar och när på olika platser. Avhandlingens syfte är att förstå hur produktion och utförande av livsstilsmobilitet är relaterade, och hur identitet och tillhörighet formuleras i relation till livsstilsmobilitet.

Avhandlingen är baserad på fyra vetenskapliga artiklar som var och en behandlar följande aspekter på livsstilsmobilitet; 1) hur livsstilsmobilitet relaterar till förmedling av fritidsfastigheter utomlands, hur denna internationella fastighetsförmedling är organiserad och hur agenter inom sektorn fungerar som förmedlare av livsstilsvärderingar samt platsidentiteter, 2) hur beslutsfattande i flyttprocessen går till, med fokus på bostadsmarknaden och formell platsanknytning, 3) de olika sätt på vilket individer föreställer sig det goda livet, samt hur detta i relation till strukturella ramverk påverkar individers möjlighet att skräddarsy en livsstil som innehåller det 'bästa av båda världar', samt 4) hur individer utvecklar idéer angående platsers identitet, och hur dessa idéer påverkar individens uppfattning om självidentitet i relation till platsanknytning samt mobilitet.

Avhandlingens empiriska fokus ligger hos de svenska pensionärer som säsongsmässigt flyttar mellan Sverige och Malta, men de individuella studierna har även dragit från andra empiriska material. Den första artikeln är primärt deskriptiv och fokuserar på produktion av livsstilsmobilitet med ett fokus på bostadsmarknaden. Artikeln är explorativ och använder en kombination av observation, enkät och intervjuer med fastighets-, och skattemäklare för att bygga en översikt över sektorn. I den andra och tredje artikeln kombineras struktutrer och agerande, då fokus ligger på hur

individer tar beslut och skräddarsyr den önskade livsstilen i förhållande till rambetingelser. Den fjärde artikeln fokuserar på meningsbyggande och identitetsskapande, och undersöker individers narrativ om livsstilsmobilitet. De tre senare artiklarna är alla baserade på djupintervjuer med utflyttade svenskar, och medan analysmetoden i den andra och tredje artikeln är tematiska och fokuserar på erfarenheter och utförande, använder den fjärde artikeln en narrativ analys för att förstå hur respondenterna reflekterar över och ger mening till sina livsstilsvärderingar och sin identitet.

Livsstilsmobilitet genererar allmänt flöden som är önskvärda hos destinationer, då de potentiellt består av finansiellt starka individer med intention att konsumera. Turism har länge ansetts skapa ekonomisk vinst för värdsamhällen och är ofta en del av nationell policy. Den potentiella ekonomiska vinst som kan resultera av mer långsiktiga former av livsstilsmobilitet har nu börjat uppmärksammas, och många nationer har börjat designa policy som explicit vänder sig till önskvärda individer, och söker fixera dem på plats. I Malta är de individuella inkomstskattereglerna ett sådant exempel. Skatteavtalen skapar potentiellt en ökad exportindustri (jmf. turismen som exportsektor; Britton 1991), och skattebas eftersom de uppmuntrar att inflyttare registrerar sig som permanent boende på Malta (vilket innebär att de stannar längre samt blir mer 'lojala'). Dessa avtal marknadsförs som en konkurrensfördel, och för individen innebär detta att deras möjligheter att utföra livsstilsmobilitet förbättras avsevärt. De fördelaktiga avtalen och strukturella rambetingelserna underlättar i mångt och mycket deras mobilitet, och det skapar även entreprenöriella möjligheter för olika professionella aktörer som specialiserar sig på de specifika behoven hos de som utför livsstilsmobilitet.

Ett överdrivet fokus på skattefördelar i marknadsföringen riskerar dock att en förvrängd bild av destinationen skapas, som utflyttare inte vill kännas vid. Införandet av höga ingångskvalifikationer i syfte att enbart nå välbeställda individer kan också vara en riskfylld satsning i konkurrensen med andra destinationer. I en uppföljningsintervju (maj 2013) med en skattemäklare i Sverige rapporterades att intresset för Malta dalat efter att skatteavtalen under en längre tid varit otillgängliga och senare gjorts om med högre kvalifikationer. Detta exemplifierar hur strukturer kan ändra platsens image och vilken roll detta spelar i beslutsfattande kring rörelsemönster. För det första innebär detta en osäkerhet angående strukturernas stabilitet vilket innebär att förutsättningarna för beslutsfattande blir osäkra. För det andra skapar högre ingångskvalifikationer en bild av Malta som en elitdestination. Individer reagerar olika på dessa förändringar, beroende på värderingar och

aspirationer. För vissa passar den nya bilden av Malta väl in med deras livsstilsvärderingar, för andra är bilden missledande.

Genom de sätt det goda livet skräddarsys kan vi förstå hur individer föreställer sig platser. Malta framställs som en bra livsstilsdestination, som tillhandahåller möjligheter för ett gott liv för aktiva och oberoende individer – jämfört med andra 'stereotypa och turistiska' destinationer. De goda förutsättningarna på Malta tillåter individerna att välja fritt hur de vill leva sina liv, och detta beskrivs som aktiv fritid, en tillflykt från begränsningar, stress och passivitet. Genom att flytta associerar individerna bilden av sig själva till frihet, spontanitet, nyfikenhet och erfarenhet. Å andra sidan tillåter den årliga tillbakaresan till Sverige en återknytning till kontinuitet, familj, minnen och igenkännande. Tack vare möjligheten att förflytta sig kan individen variera mellan olika kontext som erbjuder olika möjligheter för självförverkligande och livsstilsuttryck. Den känsla av variation som individen upplever genom upprepad mobilitet ses som en viktig faktor för självförverkligande, medan engagerandet i hemmaskapande på de två viktiga platserna tillåter en känsla av kontinuitet, säkerhet och tillhörighet.

Mobilitet blir därför en viktig resurs i sökandet efter det goda livet. Men att flytta iväg innebär att något förloras; permanentboendet i Sverige, nära och spontan kontakt med familj och vänner, platsbaserade upplevelser och fördelar. Vissa sociala band som byggts upp på plats under en lång tid måste klippas eller åtminstone sträckas ut, och många respondenter uttryckte ambivalenta känslor kring denna (om än temporära) förlust av vissa element av det goda livet. Detta leder till en vilja att 'både ha kakan och äta den', och detta är var individuellt agerande blir central. Från perspektivet hos svenska pensionärer i Malta är sökandet efter det goda livet på många sätt ett sökande efter 'det bästa av två världar', och hemmahörandet på de olika men viktiga platserna och viljan att förflytta sig uttryckts ofta med ambivalens. Därför innebär sökandet efter livskvalitet här ett konstant sökande efter balans mellan mobilitet och platsanknytning.

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